





THE HYMNS OF METHODISM

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

The Early Methodist Preachers

On Second Thoughts or Reconsiderations of Religion

The Spirit of Methodism

Studies in Literature

Studies in Religion

What Methodists Believe and Preach

THE HYMNS OF METHODISM

By

HENRY BETT, M.A., LITT.D.

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TO
MY WIFE



THIS BOOK IS PRODUCED IN
COMPLETE CONFORMITY WITH
THE AUTHORIZED ECONOMY
STANDARDS

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PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

THIS book first appeared in 1913. A second edition, revised, with some additions, came out in 1920. The present edition has been entirely recast, and very considerably enlarged, as the result of continued study of the hymns and of their sources.

In 1913 I mentioned that I had consulted some papers by the late Rev. John Wesley Thomas, the distinguished translator of Dante, which appeared in the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* many years ago, and some contributions to the *Proceedings* of the Wesley Historical Society in more recent days by the late Mr. Charles Lawrence Ford, B.A. These constituted the only critical work on the hymns worth mentioning at that time. I added that, nevertheless, most of the quotations were the result of my own reading. It is only fair to myself to repeat that. I am solely responsible for far more than nineteen-twentieths of the references given in these pages.

I should like to add that it is a great gratification to find writers like Mr. George Sampson and the late Mr. Bernard L. Manning saying, with authority and with emphasis, what I have been trying to say for thirty years past as to the unique literary and religious quality of the hymns of Methodism.

I wish to acknowledge most gratefully the help given me in reading the proofs of this volume by my friend and former colleague, the Rev. A. Raymond George, M.A.

HENRY BETT.

THE METHODIST HYMNS AND ENGLISH LITERATURE

IT was remarked by Archbishop Trench that the greatest hymn of the Middle Ages owes much of its modern recognition to the use that Goethe made of it in *Faust*. This circumstance 'helped to bring it to the knowledge of some who would not otherwise have known it; or if they had, would not have believed its worth, but that the sage and seer of this world had thus stood sponsor to it, and set his seal of recognition upon it'.¹ It would appear that the literary world is waiting for some such warranty before it realizes that in the early hymns of Methodism we possess a unique literature of devotion. The rare quality, literary and spiritual, of the hymns of the Wesleys has passed almost unrecognized for more than a hundred and fifty years, except among Methodists. There is a perverse tradition among men of letters that Methodism has no literature. Leslie Stephen contrasted the literary result of the Oxford Movement and of the Evangelical Revival, and deplored, in the latter, 'the absence of any literature possessing more than a purely historical interest'.² This is one of the most amazing judgements to which a critic ever committed himself. It is surely beyond question, for those who know both books, that John Wesley's *Journal* is in its way as absolutely literature as Newman's *Apologia*, and what a gulf there is between the pale, ecclesiastical verse of Keble and the lyrical raptures of Charles Wesley!

The mere fact is that the hymns of Methodism constitute the finest body of devotional verse in the language, and that the

¹ *Sacred Latin Poetry*, p. 273.

² *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. ii, xii, p. 101.

very best of them belong to the exalted region of the *Dies irae*, *dies illa* of Thomas of Celano, and the *Jesu dulcis memoria* of St. Bernard.

The extraordinary fecundity of Charles Wesley as a writer of religious verse has certainly obscured our sense of the literary value of what he wrote. No poet can maintain the highest level throughout a dozen volumes. In the thousands of hymns he wrote there are inevitably many that are mere versification of Evangelical commonplace. But the general quality of the style is remarkably high, and scattered through this mass of work there are many scores of hymns, at the least, that are of the very highest order. The best work of Charles Wesley abides for the universal Church in the *Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists* of 1780—an anthology, selected mainly from the vast mass of his brother's work by John Wesley. The supreme skill with which this selection was made has not been sufficiently recognized. It is only when you go through the original volumes of Charles Wesley's verse, and note the way in which his brother chose the best of the hymns, and then omitted from these the weaker stanzas, until out of a long string of verses of very varied quality there often emerges a hymn of sustained excellence, which is a complete lyric in itself—it is only after such a study that one realizes the excellence of John Wesley's editorial work. Of the result—the *Collection* of 1780—so unprejudiced a critic as Dr. Martineau declared that it was 'after the Scriptures, the grandest instrument of popular religious culture that Christendom has ever produced'.¹ Let me add here a later testimony from another distinguished scholar who was not a Methodist. Mr. Bernard L. Manning, whose early death was so great a loss to religion in England, wrote of the *Collection* of 1780: 'You may think my language about the hymns extravagant: therefore I repeat it in stronger terms. This little book ranks in Christian literature with the Psalms, the Book of Common Prayer, the Canon of the Mass. In its own way it is perfect, unapproachable, elemental in its perfection. You

¹ In a letter to Miss Winkworth.

cannot alter it except to mar it; it is a work of supreme devotional art by a religious genius.’¹

The writings of the early Methodists mark an epoch in English literature. The early eighteenth century was a period when almost every writer was chilled into conventionality by a false classicism. Addison represented the perfection of English prose. And, as De Quincey once declared, in a very discerning paragraph, ‘Addison, in particular, shrank from every bold and every profound expression as from an offence against good taste. He dared not for his life have used the word “passion” except in the vulgar sense of an angry paroxysm. He durst as soon have danced a hornpipe on the top of the Monument as have talked of “rapturous emotion”. What *would* he have said? Why, “sentiments that were of a nature to prove agreeable after an unusual rate”.’² The writings of the early Methodists marked the first return to simplicity and sincerity in prose. It was Edward FitzGerald who was the first to point this out, with characteristic insight and independence of judgement. ‘Another book I have had is Wesley’s *Journal*’, he wrote to Professor Cowell. ‘If you don’t know it, *do* know it; it is curious to think of this Diary of his running almost coevally with Walpole’s Letter-Diary, the two men born and dying too within a few years of one another, and with such different lives to record. And it is remarkable to read pure, unaffected, and undying English, while Addison and Johnson are tainted with a style which all the world imitated!’

And as in the prose, so in the poetry of the age. Appearing at the very time when English poetry was most stilted and sterile, the hymns of Methodism became the prelude of a lyrical revival. Wordsworth remarked that, with one or two negligible exceptions, ‘the poetry of the period intervening between the publication of *Paradise Lost* and *The Seasons* does not contain a single new image of external nature, and scarcely presents a familiar one from which it can be inferred that the

¹ *The Hymns of Wesley and Watts*, p. 14.

² *Works*, xi, p. 21 (1890).

eye of the poet had been steadily fixed upon his object, much less that his feelings had urged him to work upon it in the spirit of genuine imagination.¹ It would be equally true to say that for a similar period, beginning and ending a little later, say, from the death of Henry Vaughan to the youth of Robert Burns, the lyrical note was never heard in these lands. Poetry had ceased to be 'simple, sensuous, and passionate'. Fire and fervour, the sense of wonder, the arresting note of reality, had all gone. Lyrical sincerity and spontaneity reappear first of all in the hymns of Methodism. We hear again the authentic note of passion, and it betokens much for English poetry in the days to come. A single example will serve where scores might be adduced. Think of the *verve*, the imaginative boldness, the ecstatic fervour of stanzas like these in an age when English verse was dominated by the influence of Pope—the lines were published in 1749:

I cannot see Thy face, and live,
 Then let me see Thy face, and die!
 Now, Lord, my gasping spirit receive;
 Give me on eagle's wings to fly,
 With eagle's eyes on Thee to gaze,
 And plunge into the glorious blaze!

The fullness of my great reward
 A blest eternity shall be,
 But hast Thou not on earth prepared
 Some better thing than this for me?
 What, but one drop! one transient sight!
 I want a sun, a sea of light.

¹ Essay, Supplementary to the Preface of the Poems.

THE SOURCE AND DATE OF THE EARLIEST HYMNS

THE earliest of the hymns of Methodism were written during John Wesley's residence in America. One of the most interesting passages in the first volume of the Standard Edition of Wesley's *Journal* is that in which we are given a page from Wesley's Diary for 1736, containing the text of four of his hymns. Hitherto the only knowledge we have had as to any hymn written in that year has been the reference in the *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, where Wesley wrote: 'We embarked for America in the latter end of 1735. It was the next year, while I was at Savannah, that I wrote the following lines:

Is there a thing beneath the sun
That strives with Thee my heart to share?
Ah! tear it thence, and reign alone,
The Lord of every motion there!

It was in 1736, therefore, that he made his great version of Tersteegen's *Verborgne Gottes Liebe du*, 'Thou hidden love of God, whose height', which Emerson declared to be the greatest hymn in the language. Now we have to add the four hymns from the Diary for that year. 'We do not know the date of the writing,' remarks Mr. Curnock (the Editor of the Standard Edition of the *Journal*), 'but it must have been some weeks earlier than December, 1736.' These five hymns are the earliest of the hymns of Methodism: they are all translations from the German, they are all the work of *John Wesley*, and they all date from the first year of his sojourn in Georgia. Not only are these the first hymns of which we have any knowledge, but it is almost certain that they are the very first that John Wesley ever wrote. He began to learn German at the

beginning of the voyage, on October 17, 1735, and the Diary for 1736 has many entries, such as 'German', 'verses', 'translated German', 'made verses'. These entries, which show that he was working at German hymns, begin in May, 1736, and these hymns date from the next few months. The hymns in the Diary (except the first) have numbers attached—a valuable detail—and three of the four were previously known to be translations from Freylinghausen, Richter, and Zinzendorf. The fourth had never been published before, and there was some doubt as to whether it was a translation or an original hymn of Wesley's, until the present writer discovered, in searching through Knapp's *Evangelischer Liederschatz*, that it was a version of Paul Gerhardt's *Ich singe dir mit Herz und Mund*. The first lines of these hymns, and the numbers, as given in the Diary, are as follows:

- 'O Jesu, Source of calm repose.'
 124 'My soul before Thee prostrate lies.'
 215 'Jesu, to Thee my heart I bow.'
 306 'To Thee with heart and mouth I sing.'

Mr. Curnock suggested in a note that these numbers prefixed to the hymns might possibly give a clue to the 'original source whence they were drawn before translation'.

Many years ago, the writer became the happy possessor of a copy of the 1737 edition of *Das Gesang-Buch der Gemeinde in Herrn-Huth*—the hymnal of the Moravians at Herrnhut. This, except for a few corrections and an appendix, is an exact reprint of the first edition of 1735. On looking for the originals of the hymns in the Diary, it appeared that the numbers were the numbers of the pages in this book. On p. 724 (the printed number, 124, is a very natural mistake, due to Wesley's faded writing) is *Hier legt mein Sinn sich vor dir nieder*, on p. 215 *Reiner Bräut'gam meiner Seelen*, and on p. 306 *Ich singe dir mit Herz und Mund*.

There is a reference to the first of these hymns in Wesley's correspondence at this period, some months before the entry

in the Diary. At the end of a Latin letter to Count Zinzendorf (one of those which I discovered in the Archiv at Herrnhut when I was on a visit there in 1913) written at Savannah on March 15, 1736, Wesley quotes the verse:

Einen Heldenmuth,
Der da Gut und Blut
Gern um deinetwillen lasse,
Und des Fleisches Lüste hasse,
Gib mir, höchstes Gut,
Durch dein theures Blut!

This is the last stanza of Freylinghausen's *Wer ist wohl wie du*, rendered by Wesley—he may have made the version soon after writing the letter:

A patient, a victorious mind
That life and all things casts behind,
Ssprings forth obedient to Thy call.
A heart that no desire can move,
But still to adore, believe, and love,
Give me, my Lord, my Life, my All.

There are no tunes in the Herrnhut *Gesangbuch*, but the names of familiar chorales are put at the head of some of the hymns, and at the beginning of the book there is a table in which the hymns are grouped according to metre, some of the sections having an asterisked number at their head. This number, as the prefix explains, refers to the page of the Halle *Gesangbuch* where a suitable melody may be found. What is meant by the Halle *Gesangbuch* is evidently Freylinghausen's hymnal, the accepted collection of the Pietists, whose headquarters were at Halle. In the Library of Richmond College are Wesley's copies of the Herrnhut *Gesangbuch* and of Freylinghausen's *Gesangbuch*. We now know that Wesley had both books in his possession in Georgia in 1736, or, at any rate, had access to them there, for under the date, Sunday, November 21, in that year, there is an entry in his Diary, 'Freylinghausen's *Gesangbuch* with Delamotte', and the

numbered hymns in the Diary prove that he used the Herrnhut *Gesangbuch* then. Most of those who were aware that Wesley possessed both books seem to have thought that these were merely two different hymnals, without any special relation, and it has been suggested that he drew upon each of them for his translations. But the unquestionable fact is that his copy of Freylinghausen's *Gesangbuch* was Wesley's *tune-book*: it was simply the musical companion of the Herrnhut hymnal. There remains no possible doubt about this. All the thirty-three hymns that Wesley translated are found in the Herrnhut *Gesangbuch*, many of them are found nowhere else, and—as we have seen—where he attached a number it was that of the page in this book, despite the fact that two of the three numbered hymns are found in Freylinghausen also. It is plain that he did not use Freylinghausen for the hymns which the book contained, but merely for the tunes.

While he was in Georgia, in 1737, John Wesley published at Charlestown a *Collection of Psalms and Hymns*—the first hymnal to be issued in America. Among the seventy hymns contained in the book (or seventy-eight, if you reckon separately those divided into several parts) are five of Wesley's translations: they are all headed 'From the German'. These are:

'O God, Thou bottomless Abyss.'
 'Jesu, to Thee my heart I bow.'
 'O Jesu, Source of calm repose.'
 'Thou Lamb of God, Thou Prince of Peace.'
 'My soul before Thee prostrate lies.'

Seven of the hymns that Wesley translated are by Zinzendorf; four by Gerhardt; four by Scheffler; two by Tersteegen; two by Freylinghausen; two by C. F. Richter; one each by Ernst Lange, Joachim Lange, W. C. Dessler, J. J. Winckler, J. A. Rothe, Anna Dober, Maria Böhmer, Gottfried Arnold, Sigismund Gmelin, L. A. Gotter, and A. G. Spangenberg; and one is a cento from four hymns by Zinzendorf, Johann Nitschmann, and Anna Nitschmann.

It should be noted that the bulk of these writers are Pietists and Moravians. Freylinghausen (1670-1739) was the son-in-law and successor of A. H. Francke, the founder of the Orphan House at Halle. C. F. Richter (1676-1711) was the physician of the Orphan House. Joachim Lange (1670-1744) was Professor of Divinity at Halle. J. J. Winckler (1670-1722) was a Pietist clergyman. Gottfried Arnold (1666-1714), a distinguished ecclesiastical historian, was a disciple of Spener, the founder of Pietism. Ludwig Andreas Gotter (1661-1735), who was Hofrat at Gotha, had relations with Pietism. Sigismund Christian Gmelin (1679-1707) was a Separatist who had a variegated career, but was in touch with Pietists all his life. Maria Magdalena Böhmer (167?-1743) was a Pietist who contributed three hymns to Freylinghausen's collection.

Then, in addition to Zinzendorf, there are three other Moravians whose hymns Wesley translated. J. A. Rothe (1688-1758) was appointed by the Count to the pastorate of Berthelsdorf, the parish in which Herrnhut was situated, Anna Dober (1713-39) (*née* Schindler) was the wife of Leonhard J. Dober, one of the bishops of the Brethren, and A. G. Spangenberg (1704-92), who had been Assistant Professor of Divinity at Halle, was the most learned and lovable of the Moravians, and became also one of their bishops.

Thus, excepting the classical hymns of Gerhardt (1607-76), Scheffler (1624-77), and Tersteegen (1697-1769), practically all the rest of the hymns that Wesley translated were the product of the two great and closely related spiritual movements that had their headquarters at Halle and at Herrnhut.

The translations from the German were all published between 1737 and 1742. They were probably all written by 1739.

Apparently Wesley disused German after his breach with the Moravians in 1740. In November, 1745, when many German troops were encamped on the Town Moor at Newcastle-on-Tyne, in consequence of the Rebellion, he wrote in his *Journal*: 'I observed many Germans standing

disconsolate at the skirts of the congregation. To these I was constrained (though I had discontinued it so long) to speak a few words in their own language. Immediately they gathered up close together, and drank in every word.' This, of course, refers to disuse of the spoken language, but it is significant that no German books are mentioned in the *Journal* after the earliest period, while French books are often referred to. Yet, on the other hand, he read Bengel's *Erklärte Offenbarung Johannis* as late as 1754, for use in his *Notes on the New Testament*. It is probable, however, that this was merely a case of furbishing up his German to read a book of which he was in special need. In his knowledge of German, as in so much else, Wesley was a pioneer. It was not until the end of the eighteenth century, at the time when the fame of Goethe and Schiller was filtering through into England, that Englishmen began to regard German as a language worth learning. It would be possible to count on the fingers of one hand the distinguished Englishmen who knew German in 1740.

In the sermon *On Knowing Christ after the Flesh* (CXVII) there is an interesting paragraph in which John Wesley refers to his translations of German hymns: 'It was between fifty and sixty years ago that, by the gracious providence of God, my brother and I, in our voyage to America, became acquainted with the (so-called) Moravian Brethren. We quickly took knowledge what spirit they were of; six and twenty of them being in the same ship with us. We not only contracted much esteem, but a strong affection, for them. Every day we conversed with them, and consulted them on all occasions. I translated many of their hymns, for the use of our own congregations. Indeed, as I durst not implicitly follow any man, I did not take all that lay before me, but selected those which I judged to be most scriptural, and most suitable to sound experience.' He then goes on to deprecate the 'fondling expressions' found in many German hymns, and all that borders on a familiarity which is unfitting when we are addressing ourselves to the Most High.

John Wesley's versions of German hymns are amongst the very finest examples of translated verse in the language. They stand the supreme test of a translator's art, for they are as vigorous and as poetical as the originals. They read as if they had been written in English. His own standard of translation varied. Sometimes his version is as literal as it could be, to retain freedom of poetical movement, as, for example, in the stanza:

O Love, Thou bottomless abyss!
My sins are swallowed up in Thee,
Covered is my unrighteousness,
Nor spot of guilt remains on me,
While Jesu's blood, through earth and skies,
Mercy, free, boundless mercy, cries!

which renders the German verse:

O Abgrund, welcher alle Sünden
Durch Christi Tod verschlungen hat!
Das heisst die Wunden recht verbinden,
Da findet kein Verdammen statt,
Weil Christi Blut beständig schreit,
Barmherzigkeit! Barmherzigkeit!

In other hymns, again, the English does little more than express the central thought of the German, as in the lines:

Through Thy rich grace, in Jesu's blood
Blessing, redemption, life we find.
Our souls washed in this cleansing flood,
No stain of guilt remains behind.
Who can Thy mercy's stores express?
Unfathomable, numberless!

which are a version of the German stanza:

Du segnest uns in ihm, dem Herrn,
Mit überschwenglich reichem Segen,
Und gehest unsrer Armut gern
Mit deiner theuren Gnad' entgegen,
Was sind wir doch, du allerschönstes Gut,
Dass deine Lieb' so Grosses an uns thut?

John Wesley learned some Spanish while in Georgia, in order to minister to a few Spanish Jews who were in the colony. He translated one Spanish hymn, 'O God, my God, my all Thou art!'—a fine version of Psalm lxiii. The Spanish source has never been traced.

The earliest of Charles Wesley's hymns appear to have been those entitled 'A Hymn for Midnight' ('While midnight shades the earth o'erspread'), 'Written in the Beginning of a Recovery from Sickness' ('Peace, fluttering soul! the storm is o'er'), and 'After a Recovery from Sickness' ('And live I yet by power divine?'). The first of these probably dates from the early months of 1738; the others were certainly written during that period. But the real beginning of Charles Wesley's work as the poet of Methodism came with the wonderful experience of May 21, 1738. Immediately thereafter he wrote two hymns which have a new accent. 'Where shall my wondering soul begin?' is almost certainly the hymn referred to in the entry in his *Journal* for May 24: 'Toward ten my brother was brought in triumph by a troop of our friends, and declared, "I believe!" We sang the hymn with great joy.' The hymn beginning 'What morn on thee with sweeter ray' is entitled 'Congratulations to a Friend on believing in Christ', and was unquestionably addressed to his brother at this time.

These hymns, the firstfruits of Charles Wesley's genius, were all first published in the *Hymns and Sacred Poems* of 1739. From that year onward his hymns appeared in a stream of publications that only ceased in 1785—three years before his death.

JOHN WESLEY OR CHARLES WESLEY?

EVERYONE knows that there are many hymns written by the Wesleys of which it has been impossible to say, hitherto, whether they were the work of John or Charles. They appeared in publications that bore the names of both brothers, and neither of these was sufficiently concerned about his literary reputation to lay claim to his own work. Indeed, Samuel Bradburn stated that there was a compact between them not to distinguish their respective verses. The writer believes that he has been able, through a patient examination of hymns that are known to be John Wesley's, to establish certain canons that may serve to identify some other of the hymns as his, while generally confirming the belief that the bulk of the hymns are the work of Charles. John Wesley translated thirty-three hymns from the Herrnhut *Gesangbuch*, and there are a few other pieces which are definitely known to be his, such as the hymn on the Lord's Prayer ('Father of all! whose powerful voice') and the long poem about his loss of Grace Murray ('Reflections upon Past Providences'). Here, then, is the point of departure. Do these hymns, which are the work of John Wesley, exhibit any marked peculiarities? I think that they do, and I will proceed to describe them.

Note, then—

1. A strong preference for the simpler measures, particularly four-line or six-line stanzas of eight-syllabled lines. Out of the thirty-three hymns named on pp. 30-2, thirty are in lines of eight syllables. Altogether the translated hymns run to 1,432 lines, of which 224 lines are of six syllables, eighty-four lines of seven syllables, and the remainder, 1,124 lines, of eight syllables. It is hardly likely that the choice of metres was much restricted by the fact that these are translations, when it is remembered

that in the German originals twenty-nine different metres are used. But, even allowing for any such restriction, it would still seem that John Wesley had not nearly as wide a metrical range as his brother. In hymns that are known to be the work of Charles Wesley, at least thirty different verse-forms are employed, involving lines of anything between four and twelve syllables. But John Wesley seems to have written very little verse except in eight-syllabled lines.

2. A considerable use of lines rhymed consecutively. Half the quatrains in the undoubted hymns of John Wesley are rhymed thus: the first and second lines rhyming together, and the third and fourth. The alternate rhyme (the first and third lines rhymed together, and the second and fourth) is much more common in hymns. But the other form is evidently a favourite with John Wesley. Charles Wesley does not seem to have used it at all freely. I have tested the *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1749) in this matter. (All these are Charles Wesley's work, for John Wesley states expressly that he had not seen the contents of these volumes until they were in print.) And I find that Charles Wesley employed the alternate rhyme in octosyllabic quatrains about fifteen times as often as the consecutive rhyme. In the hymns of John Wesley, the use of the two forms is about equal, as we have seen.¹

¹ In his book on *The Evangelical Doctrines of Charles Wesley's Hymns* (p. 22, p. 337), Dr. Rattenbury has courteously dissented from my second canon. I think he has rather missed the point, however, for all my stress was on the consecutive rhyme in octosyllabic quatrains, and he brings other measures into consideration. I have made a new test with the first twenty hymns of this metre, which are unquestionably the work of Charles Wesley, as they are found in a modern hymnal—choosing the examples in this way so that the selection should be an impartial one. I find that six of the twenty hymns, with less than a third of the total lines, have successive rhymes, and the remaining fourteen hymns, with more than two-thirds of the total lines, have alternate rhymes. John Wesley's use of the consecutive and the alternate rhyme, in verse of this kind, is about equal, as I said. But I will concede to Dr. Rattenbury that I should stress this decidedly less than any other of these criteria.

3. A tendency to divide the octosyllabic line into equal clauses of four syllables, with a pause between. For example:

Pointed the nail and fixed the thorn.
 Let all I have and all I am.
 Let all Thy love and all Thy grief.
 And by Thee move and in Thee live.
 Thine may we die Thine may we live.

Charles Wesley's lines are generally more fluent, more continuous, than these.

4. Closely connected with the last characteristic and largely responsible for it, is the tendency to elaborate and repeat a thought. This may be discerned in all the above examples, and in many others, as:

I, I alone have done the deed!
 'Tis I Thy sacred flesh have torn!

 Ah! why did I so late Thee know,
 Thee, lovelier than the sons of men?
 Ah! why did I no sooner go
 To Thee, the only ease in pain?

This is strikingly unlike the lyrical freedom and spontaneity of Charles Wesley's verse.

5. Connected with this, again, is the tendency to begin a succession of lines with a series of parallel expressions, generally the result of a reiteration of the previous sentiment in a slightly varied phrase. For example:

No guilt Thy spotless heart hath known,
No guile hath in Thy lips been found.

To heal me, Thou hast borne my pain,
To bless me, Thou a curse wast made.

Too much to Thee I cannot give,
Too much I cannot do for Thee.

To Thee, lo! all our souls we bow;
To Thee our hearts and hands we give.

This peculiarity is not nearly so frequent in Charles Wesley's hymns.

6. A habit of carrying over a sentence from one line to another, ending, or pausing heavily, at the *second* syllable of the second line. For example:

The burden for me to sustain
Too great, . . .

To dwell within Thy wounds; then pain
Is sweet, . . .

How shall weak eyes of flesh weighed down
With sin, . . .

Thy golden sceptre from above
Reach forth, . . .

This is very common in John Wesley's verse. A dozen more examples might be given out of his translations. It is the influence of Prior, always a favourite poet with both the brothers, but particularly with John Wesley, which accounts for this particular habit of *enjambement*. It is extremely rare in Charles Wesley's hymns. Nearly all his sentences are conterminous with a line. They may last for one line, or for two or three, but they nearly always end with the end of a line.

It should be said that the above examples might be greatly multiplied in each case. Indeed all those quoted have been deliberately chosen (with the purpose of showing the strength of the case) from *the first three hymns* that are undoubtedly by John Wesley in the *Collection* of 1780, viz.:

'Extended on a cursed tree'
'I thirst. Thou wounded Lamb of God'
'Jesu, Whose glory's streaming rays'

—all translations, from Gerhardt, Zinzendorf, and Dessler respectively. Dozens of instances might be adduced, from the other hymns that are known to be John Wesley's, of the occurrence of the same characteristics.

There are two minor characteristics which may also be noted here. It would seem to be frequent in John Wesley's hymns for the last verse to be more or less an echo of the first, as in:

'Jesu, Thy blood and righteousness'
'O God, of good the unfathom'd Sea!'
'Thee will I love, my Strength, my Tower'

—and, it may be added, as in Watts' 'I'll praise my Maker while I've breath', which was so much a favourite with John Wesley. In Charles Wesley's hymns the last couplet in each verse is often the same; but the peculiarity remarked above in regard to the first and last verses is very seldom found. Also, certain words and phrases are characteristic of each of the brothers. 'Mystic', 'rapture', 'triumph', for example, are characteristic of Charles; 'duteous', 'dauntless', 'boundless', of John. When we remember, however, that many of Charles Wesley's hymns were freely revised by his brother, it will be seen that this is precarious evidence of authorship.

What, then, is the result at which we arrive by the application of these various canons to the hymns of which the authorship is uncertain?

It is, in the first place, that most of the hymns are unquestionably the work of Charles Wesley. The general impression is right in this matter. Nine hymns out of ten in the *Collection* of 1780, tried by these tests, are clearly the work of the younger brother. And this, of course, agrees with John Wesley's remark in the Preface that 'but a small part of these hymns is of his own composing'.

But, in the second place, we conclude that there are a few hymns which may be confidently attributed, on the strength of these considerations, to *John Wesley*; especially the following:

'Father of lights, from whom proceeds.'
'Fondly my foolish heart essays.'
'Eternal Beam of Light Divine.'
'Come, Holy Ghost, all-quickenng Fire,
Come, and my hallowed heart inspire.'

‘Come, Holy Ghost, all-quickenings Fire,
 Come, and in me delight to rest.’
 ‘Jesu, Thou knowest my simpleness.’
 ‘Jesu, if still the same Thou art.’
 ‘Peace, doubting heart! my God’s I am.’
 ‘My God, if I may call Thee mine.’

Anything like detailed proof is naturally impossible here. But I venture to think that anyone who will carefully apply these principles of criticism to these hymns will feel reasonably certain that they are the work of the ‘sometime Fellow of Lincoln’.

I wrote the above paragraphs more than twenty years ago. Since then, at intervals, I have repeatedly attacked the problem afresh. I should not modify any of my earlier suggestions, as the result of such renewed and prolonged investigation, but I should venture to suggest that the following additional hymns are probably also the work of John Wesley:

‘And can it be that I should gain?’
 ‘How do Thy mercies close me round!’
 ‘Father, whose everlasting Love.’
 ‘Leader of faithful souls, and Guide.’
 ‘Thee will I praise with all my heart.’
 ‘My heart is full of Christ, and longs.’
 ‘When Israel out of Egypt came.’

I should also suggest some other critical canons, in addition to these previously stated. Thus:

1. There are some characteristics of Charles Wesley’s verse that are very seldom present in John’s. For example, he is fond of compounds like ‘bliss-inspiring’, ‘blood-besprinkled’, ‘ever-slaughtered’, ‘oft-repeated’, ‘self-desperate’, ‘self-destroyed’, ‘self-doomed’, ‘self-hardened’, ‘self-inclined’, ‘self-saving’, ‘sin-avenging’, ‘sin-convincing’, ‘sin-destroying’, ‘sin-subduing’, ‘soul-composing’, ‘soul-distracting’, ‘soul-dividing’, ‘soul-insinuating’, ‘soul-transforming’, and the like. He is particularly fond of compounds beginning with *all*—like ‘all-alluring’, ‘all-atoning’, ‘all-cleansing’, ‘all-comprising’, ‘all-

conquering', 'all-creating', 'all-gracious', 'all-loving', 'all-merciful', 'all-obtaining', 'all-redeeming', 'all-searching', 'all-seeing', 'all-sufficient', 'all-victorious', and so on. I think that John Wesley seldom uses such compounds as these—hardly ever one made up of a noun and a verb, and only very occasionally a compound in *all*. There are only seven examples of the last type—'all-atoning', 'all-disposing', 'all-enlivening', 'all-gracious', 'all-infinite', 'all-perfect', and 'all-searching'—in all the 1,700 lines which are definitely known to be John Wesley's work.

2. Charles Wesley occasionally uses words of five and six syllables, generally adjectives and adverbs, and sometimes employs these with considerable effect, as, for example:

There let it for Thy glory burn
 With *inextinguishable* blaze;
 And trembling to its source return,
 In humble prayer and fervent praise,

and:

To Thee, *inseparably* joined,
 Let all our spirits cleave;
 O may we all the loving mind
 That was in Thee receive!

and:

It stands securely high,
Indissolubly sure;
 Our glorious mansion in the sky
 Shall evermore endure.

There are a good many of these words, mostly beginning with *in*—like 'inaccessible', 'incommunicable', 'inextinguishable', 'inviolable', 'irrevocable', 'incomprehensible', 'indissolubly', 'immeasurably', 'inseparably', 'imperceptibly'. Such words never, or hardly ever, find a place in John Wesley's verse.

3. But John Wesley was fond of adjectives beginning with *un*—like 'unashamed', 'unblameable', 'unbounded', 'unchangeable', 'unclouded', 'unconsumed', 'undiminished', 'undismayed', 'unspeakable', 'unsullied', 'unwearied'. So, for example, in:

Greatness *unspeakable* is Thine,
 Greatness, whose *undiminished* ray,
 When short-lived worlds are lost, shall shine
 When earth and heaven are fled away.
Unchangeable, all-perfect Lord,
 Essential life's *unbounded* sea,
 What lives and moves, lives by Thy word,
 It lives and moves and is from Thee.

There are forty-four examples of this type of word in the thirty-three hymns he translated from the German, and four more in the poem, *Reflections upon Past Providences*.

4. Again, John Wesley was fond of using triads of nouns, as in:

Till *toil*, and *grief*, and *pain* shall cease,
 Where all is *calm*, and *joy*, and *peace*.

and (to a much smaller extent) triads of verbs, as in:

A heart that no desire can move,
 But still to *adore*, *believe*, and *love*.

There are scores of similar examples, like 'earth . . . sea . . . sky', 'air . . . sea . . . land', 'world . . . sin . . . death', 'toil . . . grief . . . pain', 'love . . . thanks . . . praise', 'want . . . pain . . . shame', 'life . . . motion . . . sense', 'live . . . move . . . reign', 'hear . . . feel . . . think', 'groan . . . bleed . . . die'. I think this trick of triplicating associated words is not found nearly so often in Charles Wesley.

5. John Wesley's verse often shows a certain stiffness of movement, as, for example:

Abundant sweetness, while I sing
 Thy love, my ravished heart o'erflows;
 Secure in Thee, my God and King,
 Of glory that no period knows,

and:

I know Thou canst not but be good;
 How shouldst Thou, Lord, Thy grace restrain?
 Thou, Lord, whose blood so freely flowed
 To save me from all guilt and stain.

Charles Wesley's verse always moves more freely than this.

6. The formal phrases which occur in the poetic diction of the eighteenth century are sometimes found in John Wesley's verse, as, for example, 'the ethereal blue', 'the solar fire', 'his genial ray', 'my constant flame'. Such *clichés*, familiar as they are in the poetry of the period, never (or very seldom) occur in Charles Wesley's verse. He was rather less under the influence of the contemporary mode than his brother.

7. And, finally, I think that every instance where 'I'd' is used for 'I would', or 'I'll' for 'I will', is found in John Wesley's verse. There are only a few examples, it is true, but as far as I have observed there are none at all in Charles Wesley's undoubted hymns. There is certainly not a single instance in the two volumes of the *Hymns and Sacred Poems* of 1749.

It should be remembered that the occurrence of any of these traits of style has a much-increased significance in the case of John Wesley, simply because he wrote so much less than his brother. If a word or a construction occurs repeatedly in some forty or fifty hymns, it is obviously much more evidential than if it occurs the same number of times in five or six thousand.

There is perhaps one other small clue, which I mention for what it is worth. When compiling their various volumes of verse, in which by far the greater part, of course, was the composition of Charles Wesley, the brothers seem to have had the very natural habit of inserting work by any other hand here and there in patches, and not in single hymns evenly distributed throughout the volume. Thus in the *Hymns and Sacred Poems* of 1739, in which there are twenty-five translations (all the work of John Wesley, with the doubtful exception of the versions of two hymns by Antoinette Bourignon), only eight of these stand by themselves, while there are three groups of two, one group of three, and two groups of four. So in the *Collection* of 1780 the hymns by Dr. Isaac Watts are grouped together, two in one place and three in another, and only one stands alone; the two hymns of

Dr. Henry More are placed together; and John Wesley's translated hymns are twice put together in pairs. I find that of the sixteen hymns in all I now venture to attribute, on internal evidence, to John Wesley, eight are placed next to translations, two are next to hymns by Dr. Watts, and three are next to other hymns that I conjecture to be John Wesley's—a total of thirteen out of the sixteen—and as to the remaining three no clue of this kind exists, as they are not in the early volumes published by the Wesleys, or in the *Collection* of 1780. It is difficult to resist the suspicion that it was editorial knowledge of the authorship that led to this grouping together of hymns by the same hand.

To give a detailed example of what I mean, in the *Hymns and Sacred Poems* of 1739 there is the following series: 'Commit thou all thy griefs' (a translation); 'Eternal Beam of Light Divine' (which I attribute to John Wesley); 'Thou Lamb of God, Thou Prince of Peace', 'All glory to the Eternal Three' (both translations); 'Fondly my foolish heart essays', 'My God, if I may call Thee mine', 'Peace, doubting heart! my God's I am' (all three of which I attribute to John Wesley); 'O Thou to whose all-searching sight', 'Jesu, Thy boundless love to me', 'O God, of good the unfathom'd Sea', 'O God, Thou bottomless Abyss' (all four of which are translations). This means, if I am right in supposing the four hymns which are not translations to be the work of John Wesley—a *conjecture arrived at on other grounds*—that here is a solid section of twenty pages which is all his work.

The following is a complete list of John Wesley's translations from the German:

Extended on a cursed tree.

O Welt, sieh hier dein Leben (Gerhardt).

Jesu, Thy boundless love to me.

O Jesu Christ, mein schönstes Licht (Gerhardt).

Commit thou all thy griefs.

Befiehl du deine Wege (Gerhardt).

To Thee with heart and mouth I sing.¹
 Ich singe dir mit Herz und Mund (Gerhardt).
 Thee will I love, my strength, my tower.
 Ich will dich lieben, meine Stärke (Scheffler).
 O God, of good the unfathom'd Sea.
 Du unvergleichlichs Gut (Scheffler).
 Thou, Jesu, art our King.
 Dich, Jesu, loben wir (Scheffler).
 Jesu, Thy soul renew my own.
 Die Seele Christi heil'ge mich (Scheffler).
 Thou hidden love of God, whose height.
 Verborgne Gottes Liebe du (Tersteegen).
 Lo! God is here, let us adore.
 Gott ist gegenwärtig! (Tersteegen).
 O God, Thou bottomless Abyss.
 O Gott, du Tiefe sonder Grund (Ernst Lange).
 O God, what offering shall I give.²
 O Jesu, süßes Licht (Joachim Lange).
 Jesu, whose glory's streaming rays.
 Mein Jesu, dem die Seraphinen (Dessler).
 Shall I, for fear of feeble man.
 Sollt' ich aus Furcht vor Menschenkindern (Winckler).
 Thou Lamb of God, Thou Prince of Peace.
 Stilles Lamm und Friedensfürst (Richter).
 My soul before Thee prostrate lies.
 Hier legt mein Sinn sich vor dir nieder (Richter).
 O Jesu, source of calm repose.
 Wer ist wohl wie du (Freylinghausen).

¹ This hymn Wesley never published. It is only to be found in the *Diary* of 1736, and it was not known whether the verses were original or a translation until I noticed, and pointed out to Mr. Curnock, that the hymn is a version of Gerhardt's *Ich singe dir mit Herz und Mund*. (See the Standard Edition of the *Journal*, I, p. 299, II, p. 6.)

² Wesley's version begins, 'Jesu, Thy light again I view', but the first verse of the hymn was omitted when it was included in the *Collection* of 1780. There it begins with the second verse, 'But O! what offering shall I give', slightly changed to, 'O God, what offering shall I give'.

Monarch of all, with lowly fear.
 Monarch aller Ding (Freylinghausen).
 Jesu, Thy blood and righteousness.
 Christi Blut und Gerechtigkeit (Zinzendorf).
 O Thou, to whose all-searching sight.
 Seelen-Bräutigam, O du Gottes Lamm (Zinzendorf).
 Jesu, to Thee my heart I bow.
 Reiner Bräut'gam meiner Seelen (Zinzendorf).
 O God of God, in whom combine.
 Herz, der göttlichen Natur (Zinzendorf).
 Eternal depth of love divine.
 Du ewiger Abgrund der seligen Liebe (Zinzendorf).
 O Thou whom sinners love, whose care.
 Verliebter in die Sünderschaft (Zinzendorf).
 All glory to the Eternal Three.
 Schau von deinem Thron (Zinzendorf).
 I thirst, 'Thou wounded Lamb of God.¹
 Now I have found the ground wherein.
 Ich habe nun den Grund gefunden (Rothe).
 Holy Lamb, who Thee receive.
 Du heiliges Kind (Dober).
 What shall we offer our good Lord.
 Der König ruht und schauet doch (Spangenberg).
 Regardless now of things below.
 Ein's Christen Herz (Maria M. Böhmer).
 Meek, patient Lamb of God, to Thee.
 O stilles Gottes Lamm (Gottfried Arnold).
 O Thou who all things canst control.
 Ach, treib aus meiner Seele (Sigismund Gmelin).
 High praise to Thee, all gracious God.
 Sei hochgelobt, barmherz'ger Gott (Gotter).

¹ This hymn is a cento from four German hymns, Zinzendorf's *Ach, mein verwundter Fürste!* (verses 1-2 of the English), J. Nitschmann's *Du blutiger Versühner!* (verses 3-6), Zinzendorf's *Der Gott von unserm Bunde* (verse 7), and Anna Nitschmann's *Mein König! deine Liebe* (verse 8). All these four hymns are in the same supplement (*Anhang*) of the *Herrnhut Gesangbuch*.

I have proved that every line that Wesley translated from the German is found in the Herrnhut *Gesangbuch*—with one small and interesting exception. Spangenberg's hymn, *Der König ruht und schauet doch*, is found in one of the supplements, but the last lines of the following stanza in Wesley's version do not correspond with the German:

He prospers all His servants' toils,
 But of peculiar grace has chose
 A flock, on whom His kindest smiles
 And choicest blessings He bestows;
 Devoted to their common Lord,
 True followers of the bleeding Lamb,
 By God beloved, by men abhorred—
And HERRNHUTH is the favourite Name!

In his copy of the *Hymns and Sacred Poems* of 1742, preserved at Richmond College, Wesley afterward annotated the last line: 'It was! But how is the fine gold become dim!'

The last lines of the stanza in the Herrnhut *Gesangbuch* are:

Und schenket ihm mit frohem Muth,
 Geist, Seel', und Leib, Ehr, Gut, und Blut.

This might be rendered:

Who have to Him with joyous mind
 Their bodies, souls, and all resigned.

Only two explanations are possible. Either Wesley deliberately varied from the German, and introduced this reference to Herrnhut himself, which does not seem likely, since the rest of the hymn is a pretty close and regular translation; or Spangenberg wrote something of the kind originally, which was modified before being inserted in the Herrnhut *Gesangbuch*. In that case it must be supposed that Wesley saw Spangenberg's manuscript while in Georgia or at Herrnhut itself.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE HYMNS

THE language of the hymns of Methodism is distinctly the most modern diction to be found in eighteenth-century verse. It is comparatively seldom that we encounter any of the verbal mannerisms of the period, as we so often do, for example, in the verse of Dr. Watts. But there are a few words which are used in a sense now more or less obsolete—these are nearly all Latinisms—and there are also a few other words which (as the rhyme or the metre of the verse shows) were pronounced by the Wesleys in a way that is now out of date.

It is rather surprising (especially when we remember Milton) that there are so few grammatical constructions in the hymns that are reminiscent of Latin syntax. There is a clear example in:

Our permanent abode,
From *the founded world* prepared;
Purchased by the blood of God,

and another in:

Endless scenes of wonder rise
From that mysterious tree,
Crucified before our eyes,
Where we our Maker see.

There are also numerous instances where a clause begins with a relative pronoun, like:

Who their God can never know,
Let their spirit downward go,

and:

Whom man forsakes Thou wilt not leave,
Ready the outcasts to receive,

or with an inversion, like:

Me with arms of love receive,
Me, of sinners chief, forgive!

and:

Me with that restless thirst inspire,
That sacred, infinite desire.

But these last constructions had become naturalized in our poetic diction before the time of the Wesleys.

There are, however, a good many examples of the use of single words that betray the Latin scholar in the Wesleys. Most of these, I think, are dealt with in the following pages.

'Comfort' to-day has the general sense of consolation, but the Latin *confortare* means first of all (as the relation to *fortis* shows) 'to make strong'. The word is not classical, but it occurs frequently in the Vulgate, and in consequence 'comfort' in some of the earlier English versions of the Bible often has the primary sense of an impartation of strength. Thus in the account of the passion of our Lord in Luke xxii. 43, 'And there appeared an angel unto Him, from heaven, *strengthening* Him', ἐνισχύων αὐτόν, Tyndale's version reads '*comforting* Him'. In *As You Like It* (ii, 6) when the aged Adam lies down exhausted, Orlando says to him, 'Thy conceit is nearer death than thy powers. For my sake *be comfortable*; hold death awhile at the arm's end', where the sense is not 'Be easy' but 'Be *strong*: do not yield to death'.

The point is rather dubious, perhaps, but I cannot help feeling that it is the sense of strength, rather than consolation, imparted by the manifested presence of our Lord that is meant in the lines:

Present we know Thou art,
But O Thyself reveal!
Now, Lord, let every bounding heart
The mighty *comfort* feel.

It may be remarked here that *Comforter* was a much more adequate rendering of παράκλητος in the seventeenth century

than it is to-day, for the Greek word—like *Advocate* (the Latin *advocatus*) which is the best equivalent of Paraclete—means originally some person who is *called to one's side*, that he may give aid, whether it be testimony, or counsel, or defence, or any other kind of help. The word had therefore much more the significance of 'one who strengthens' than of 'one who consoles'.

'Devoted' in modern English usage always has the sense of earnest attachment to a person or a cause. The Latin *devotus* has much the same sense. But the word is the participle of *devovere*, which meant to dedicate to a deity, as a sacrifice, and often therefore to doom to death. In earlier English we frequently find 'devote' and 'devoted' in the sense of either *dedicated* or *doomed*. So Milton in *Paradise Lost* (iii, 206-9) says that man, when he has sinned:

Affecting Godhead, and so losing all,
To expiate his treason hath naught left,
But, to destruction sacred and *devote*,
He with his whole posterity must die,

where *devote* (here a variant form of *devoted*) means 'dedicated to destruction and death'.

There is unquestionably some memory of the primary meaning of the Latin verb from which the word is derived where John Wesley writes:

When, passing through the watery deep,
I ask in faith His promised aid,
The waves an awful distance keep,
And shrink from my *devoted* head;
Fearless their violence I dare;
They cannot harm, for God is there!

for the meaning is that because the traveller's life has been sacrificially dedicated to God, the waves shrink back, and dare not touch him.

'Express', as a verb, is now almost confined in ordinary

speech to the sense of 'utter in words', and, as an adjective, to the sense of 'emphatic' or 'precise', but the Latin *exprimere* had the primary meaning 'to press out, to force out', and *expressus*, while it means 'apparent, evident, manifest', retained, I think, something of the original metaphor: it is often used, for example, of the likeness which is stamped out on coins. In earlier English the different forms of the word retained more of that sense than they commonly carry to-day, and 'express' is employed in the Authorized Version of Hebrews i. 3, 'the *express image* of His person', to render χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ, where the word χαρακτήρ is closely related to χαράσσω and χάραγμα, used of a representation that is engraved or stamped, as in Acts xvii. 29. There is clearly something of this sense of the word in such lines as:

His image visibly *express*,
His glory pouring from my breast,
O'er all my bright humanity
Transformed into the God I see!

and:

O might I Thy form *express*!
Stamp'd with real holiness,
And filled with perfect love!

where the association with words like 'image', 'form', and 'stamp' suggest the implicit metaphor of a shape struck out, as if with a die on some plastic substance.

'Illustrate' has come to mean, in modern English, no more than to accompany with a picture, either visual or mental, as we speak of an *illustration* in a book or an *illustration* in a speech, and indeed it had something of the latter rhetorical sense in Latin, for Quintilian writes of ἐνάργεια: 'illustratio et evidentia, quae non tam dicere videtur, quam ostendere: et affectus non aliter, quam si rebus ipsis intersimus, sequentur' (*Inst. Orat.*, vi, 2).

But the original sense of *illustrare* and its derivatives is 'to set in the light; to illuminate', as the relation to *lustrum* is

enough to show. It is evidently the proper and primary sense of the word that is intended in the lines:

Expand Thy wings, celestial Dove,
And, brooding o'er my nature's night,
Call forth the ray of heavenly love;
Let there in my dark soul be light!
And fill the *illustrated* abyss
With glorious beams of endless bliss!

The word 'peculiar' now means 'odd', in general usage, though it has retained something of its original meaning in ecclesiastical law. It is the Latin *peculiaris*, from *peculium*, which signified the private property which was allowed to belong to a child or a slave: hence it meant 'one's own: belonging especially to one's self'. It occurs in this sense in the Authorized Version in Exodus xix. 5, 'Ye shall be a *peculiar* treasure unto Me from among all peoples', and in Deuteronomy xiv. 2, 'The Lord hath chosen thee to be a *peculiar* people unto Himself'. And so in the hymn:

Thy own *peculiar* servant claim,
For Thy own truth and mercy's sake:
Hallow in me Thy glorious name;
Me for Thine own this moment take!

The noun 'pomp', and still more the adjective 'pompous', have acquired in modern English usage a sense of unreality, and are frequently used in such phrases as 'empty pomp' and 'a pompous manner', where the suggestion is of a show of stateliness without anything to warrant it. Probably the English word 'pomp' will finally come to mean nothing but a mere parade of dignity. But the Greek *πομπή* and the Latin *pompa* meant a solemn procession, often as a part of religious rites. Thus Herodotus tells us that when Hercules arrived in Egypt 'the Egyptians, having crowned him with a garland, led him in procession [*ὑπὸ πομπῆς ἐξήγον*] as designing to sacrifice him to Zeus' (ii, 45). It is true that the Latin *pompa*

had a secondary sense of pretentious parade, which appears in Cicero, for example, where he writes of 'the pomp of rhetoricians'. 'Quid ad has definitiones possint dicere? atque haec pleraque sunt prudenter acuteque disserentium, illa quidem ex rhetorum pompa, ardore animorum, cotesque virtutum' (*Tusc. Quaest.*, iv, 21).

But in earlier English 'pomp' and 'pompous' had always the primary sense of processional state, as in the lines from *Newes from both Heaven and Hell*, by Robert Greene, the Elizabethan dramatist: 'Thus, in this *pompous* manner, being placed in the procession next Lucifer himselfe, they returned to hell.' And so in several examples in Milton, as in *Samson Agonistes* (1311-12):

This day to Dagon is a solemn feast
With sacrifices, triumph, *pomp*, and games,

and, with the meaning of a train of attendants, a procession of followers, in *Paradise Lost* (viii, 59):

forth she went,
Not unattended; for on her as Queen
A *pomp* of winning Graces waited still.

Milton always uses the word in the classical sense, I think.

It is clearly this sense of 'pomp' and 'pompous' that is intended in lines like the following, all, significantly enough, from hymns on the Resurrection and Ascension and Second Advent of our Lord:

Jesus, faithful to His word,
Shall with a shout descend;
All heaven's host their glorious Lord
Shall *pompously* attend,

and:

Before me place in dread array,
The *pomp* of that tremendous day
When Thou with clouds shalt come!

and:

There your exalted Saviour see,
 Seated at God's right hand again,
 In all His Father's majesty,
 In everlasting *pomp* to reign,

and:

There the *pompous* triumph waits;
 Lift your heads, eternal gates:
 Wide unfold the radiant scene;
 Take the King of glory in!

'Prevent' is *praevenire*, to go before. In earlier English the classical sense is retained, and the word merely means to anticipate. The present meaning is a later development, for the word has degenerated, like many others. It is rather a melancholy reflection upon human nature to think of the number of words that have declined from a perfectly innocent sense to one that is malicious or contemptuous. Here the original sense of going before has led to the depraved significance of going before to block the way of another, and so to hinder, to 'prevent' in the modern sense.

But in our older writers the word kept the etymological sense, and so Milton writes in the great ode *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity*:

See how from far upon the eastern road
 The star-led wizards haste with odours sweet!
 Oh! run: *prevent* them with thy humble ode,
 And lay it lowly at His blessed feet!

So too in the Collect for Easter Week, 'We humbly beseech Thee, that, as by Thy special grace *preventing* us Thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by Thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect', where the sense is 'Thy special grace going before', as in the theological phrase 'prevenient grace', which means the grace that goes before and prepares the way for saving grace. In fact, 'prevent' always

means 'anticipate' at least as late as Dryden's time, as the use of the word in *Astraea Redux* (282-3) and *Absalom and Achitophel* (343-4) and *The Hind and the Panther* (ii, 639-41) is enough to prove.

The original sense of the word is found in many of Wesley's hymns, as in the lines:

He *prevents* His creatures' call,
Kind and merciful to all,

and:

Thy eyes must all my thoughts survey,
Preventing what my lips would say,

and:

Prevent, accompany and bless,
And crown the whole with full success!

Our words 'property' and 'propriety', which have such very different meanings, are both from the Latin *proprietas*, which means 'that which is peculiar to any thing', and so both 'a quality or attribute', and 'a possession or appanage'. Both these meanings belong to the English word 'property', which may signify, for example, either 'the landed *property*' which belongs to some person, or 'the chemical *property*' which belongs to some substance. 'Propriety', which is really only another spelling of the same word, has come to mean in modern English seemliness of behaviour, and is quite separated in its significance from the word 'property'. But in earlier English 'propriety' meant what 'property' means now. Milton writes in *Paradise Lost* (iv, 750-3):

Hail, wedded Love, mysterious law, true source
Of human offspring, sole *propriety*
In Paradise of all things common else!

This is the sense of the word when Wesley writes:

Whate'er I have was freely given:
Nothing but sin I call my own:
Other *propriety* disclaim,
Thou only art the great I AM!

The Latin *securus* means 'free from care' (*se-* for *sine-cura*). In earlier English the word 'secure' retained the classical sense, which to-day is almost entirely lost. We hardly distinguish nowadays between 'safe' and 'secure', but 'secure' was once subjective, while 'safe' was objective. 'Secure' meant a man's own *sense* of safety, whether it was warranted or not: 'safe' meant the *fact* that he was not actually in danger, whether he knew it or not. In Matthew xxviii. 14, 'And if this come to the governor's ears we will persuade him, *and rid you of care*', καὶ ὑμᾶς ἀμείμνους ποιήσομεν, is rendered in the Authorized Version, with the earlier, subjective, classical sense of the word, '*and secure you*'. Jeremy Taylor opposes the earlier meanings of the two words 'secure' and 'safe' when he remarks that wicked men 'are not *secure*, even when they are *safe*', i.e. the sinner has no inner sense of safety, even when he is not actually in peril. The meaning of the two words is again illustrated (the other way round) in the last lines of Ben Jonson's *Epode* (*The Forest*, xi):

he will refrain
From thoughts of such a strain,
And to his sense object this sentence ever,
Man may *securely* sin, but *safely* never,

i.e. a man may sin without any present sense of peril, but never without the reality of it.

The lines—

Lo! on a narrow neck of land
'Twixt two unbounded seas I stand,
Secure, insensible:
A point of time, a moment's space,
Removes me to that heavenly place,
Or shuts me up in Hell,

are a good example of the Latin use of the word, for the whole sense of the stanza is that the soul is not safe, but in instant peril, though as yet unconscious of any danger, and the next

verse is a prayer that a sense of danger and of fear may be given. So again the lines—

O never suffer me to sleep
Secure within the verge of hell!
 But still my watchful spirit keep
 In lowly awe and loving zeal;
 And bless me with the godly fear,
 And plant that guardian-angel there!

illustrate the classical sense of 'secure', for we must be in dread danger if we 'sleep within the verge of hell', but we may be unaware of our danger; careless, carefree, 'secure'.

'Tremendous' is another word that retains much of its original sense in the hymns of the Wesleys. It derives, of course, from *tremere*, 'to tremble', 'to shake with fear', and *tremendus* in Latin always has the sense of 'formidable', 'frightful'. In common usage to-day, our English word 'tremendous' hardly means more than huge, colossal, overwhelming, though the dictionaries define it rather more along the line of its Latin significance.

Now, wherever the word 'tremendous' is used in the hymns it seems to have more than a trace of the etymological meaning. It is used of the Judgement Day:

Our cautioned souls prepare
 For that *tremendous* day,
 And fill us now with watchful care,
 And stir us up to pray,

and in a reference to the name of Jesus putting to flight legions of evil spirits:

Jesu's *tremendous* name
 Puts all our foes to flight
 Jesus, the meek, the angry Lamb,
 A Lion is in fight!

In every example of the use of the word there is some thought of men or demons *trembling* before God.

'Virtue' in modern English is almost restricted to the sense of moral excellence, and opposed to vice. But the Latin *virtus* (as its relation to *vir* is enough to show) meant first of all manliness, manfulness, and then by a natural transition, good properties, good qualities, goodness. But it had a secondary sense of strength, power, efficacy. This has almost disappeared from English to-day, except for a trace in such phrases as 'healing virtue', which means some remedial *power*, and 'in virtue of', which means in the *power* or by the authority of.

Milton writes in *Comus* (164-6):

when once her eye
Hath met the *virtue* of this magic dust
I shall appear some harmless villager,

where the reference is to the deluding power of the sorcerer's charm. And the δύναμις of Mark v. 30 (and Luke vi. 19 and Luke viii. 46), where our Lord knew that *power* had gone forth from Him to heal the sick, is rendered in the Authorized Version: 'Jesus, knowing in Himself that *virtue* had gone out of Him.'

It is with the meaning of power that the word is used in Wesley's lines:

Saviour, we know Thou art
In every age the same:
Now, Lord, in ours exert
The *virtue* of Thy name;
And daily, through Thy word, increase
Thy blood-besprinkled witnesses!

There are three other words that stand rather apart from the rest of these that have been discussed. One is 'Unitarian'.

The *Unitarian* fiend expel,
And chase his doctrine back to hell.

Remarks have often been ignorantly made on the bitter intolerance of these lines, which many have understood as

referring to the teaching of those whom we now call Unitarians. The fact is, of course, that they refer solely to Mohammedanism. The hymn is headed, in the *Collection* of 1780, 'For the Mahometans' (in the pamphlet in which it was originally published, 'For the Turks'), and it is full of specific allusions to Mohammed, 'That Arab-thief, as Satan bold, Who quite destroyed Thine Asian fold'. The use of 'Unitarian' in reference to Moslem doctrine is quite correct, and, in the eighteenth century, was quite common. Gibbon, in describing the rise of Islam, refers again and again to the march of the *Unitarian* armies, the advance of the *Unitarian* banners. Those Christians who deny the Divinity of Christ were always called Socinians in Wesley's time; it was only at the end of the eighteenth century that they began to be generally called Unitarians. Indeed, the next hymn but one to this in the *Hymns of Intercession for all Mankind* (1758), is entitled 'For the Ariens, Socinians, Deists, Pelagians, etc.'

Then there is the use of the word 'attend'. In modern English, 'attend' has the general sense of *wait upon*, but it used to have the sense of *wait for*. Now it means to render service to, as a doctor *attends* a patient; or to give heed to, as a pupil *attends* to his lessons; or to be present at, as a magistrate *attends* the court. But formerly 'attend' also meant to await a future event, to expect.

The sense in which we use the word to-day is in general accordance with the meaning of the Latin *attendere* (from which our word ultimately comes) for that, I think, always means 'to give heed to'. But the French *attendre* had the meaning 'to expect', 'to await', and when the word came into our language from the French it retained that sense for a considerable period. Thus in Milton where (in *Paradise Lost*, xi, 549-52) Adam speaks to the archangel of—

this cumbrous charge
Which I must keep till my appointed day
Of rendering up, and patiently *attend*
My dissolution.

So, again, in *Paradise Regained* (i, 52–5), Satan speaks of the ages that had passed since Adam lost Paradise:

deceived by me, though since
With dread *attending* when that fatal wound
Shall be inflicted by the seed of Eve
Upon my head.

It is in this sense of *await* that the word is obviously used in Wesley's lines:

Jesus, for this we still *attend*,
Thy kingdom in the isles to prove;
The law of sin and death to end,
We wait for all the power of love!

The other word is 'resent'. It does not occur in Latin, though it is, of course, from the Latin *sentire*, to feel. This passed into French as *sentir*, with the same meaning. Then the prefix *re-* was added, and the French language acquired the word *ressentir*, which still means to feel, but with a constant leaning in the direction, I think, of feeling something unpleasant—*une douleur, une injure, un mal*. But when the word was first introduced into our language, in the seventeenth century, it meant simply 'to feel', and it was later that the meaning was restricted to angry and inimical feelings. Pepys writes in his *Diary*, on February 13, 1669, of something done at the King's Council, that 'it was mighty well *resented* and approved of', and Barrow writes in one of his sermons of 'that thanksgiving whereby we should express an affectionate *resentment*' of all that we owe to God. In Wesley's own day, Dr. Johnson defined *resent* as 'to take well or ill'.

Now Wesley's lines:

My stony heart Thy voice shall rent,
Thou wilt, I trust, the veil remove;
My inmost bowels shall *resent*
The yearnings of Thy dying love,

use the word 'resent' in the earlier sense of 'feel'. As it happens,

there are two other details in the lines that recall out-of-date usages of language and metaphor. The Hebrews regarded the viscera as the seat of emotion, and in consequence there are many passages in the Old Testament which embody this notion. There are also half a dozen places in the New Testament (all but one in the writings of St. Paul) where σπλάγχνα is used in this way. Unhappily, several of these passages are reflected literally in Wesley's hymns, where the natural idiom in English would demand a reference to 'the heart', as in the first line of the stanza which has been quoted. The other point is the use of 'rent' for 'rend' in the line that has been quoted:

My stony heart Thy voice shall *rent*.

John Wesley, in his *Short English Grammar*, gives 'rend' as the present tense, and 'rent' as the imperfect; but Charles Wesley, in the hymns, consistently used 'rent' as the present tense of the verb. There is warrant for it in earlier writers, as in Shakespeare:

And will you *rent* our ancient love asunder
To join with men in scorning your poor friend?
(*Midsummer's Night's Dream*, iii, 2, 215.)

And in George Herbert:

Better by worms be all once spent,
Than to have hellish moths still gnaw and fret
Thy name in books, which may not *rent*.
(*Content*, 43.)

'Rent' as the present tense occurred in several passages of the Authorized Version of the Bible, but it has been altered in later editions in every case but one (Jeremiah iv. 30).

'Rend' and 'rent' would appear to have been used indifferently for the present tense—as they are in Shakespeare—until nearly Wesley's time.

There is one grammatical archaism which frequently recurs

in the hymns—the use of the preterite for the passive participle, as in:

The Sun of Righteousness on me
Hath *rose* with healing in his wings.

Holiness unto the Lord,
Still be *wrote* upon our heart.

and innumerable other examples.

Wesley, in his *Short English Grammar*, published in 1748, gives 'rose' and 'strove' as being both the imperfect and the passive participle of 'rise' and 'strive'. He gives 'writ' or 'wrote' as the imperfect, and 'written' as the participle of 'write'.

In the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1758 there is a witty poem by Dr. Byrom, *The Passive Participle's Petition*:

Till just of late, good English has thought fit
To call me *written*, or to call me *writ*;
But what is writ or written, by the vote
Of writers now, hereafter, must be *wrote*,
And what is spoken, too, hereafter *spoke*,
And measures never to be *broken*, *broke*.

I never could be *driven*, but in spite
Of Grammar, they have *drove* me from my right.
None could have *risen*, to become my foes;
But what a world of enemies have *rose*!
Who have not *gone*, but they have *went* about,
And, *torn* as I have been, have *tore* me out.

The poem, which was probably suggested by *The Humble Petition of Who and Which*, in the *Spectator*, ends with the appeal:

Let all the learned take some better heed,
And leave the vulgar to confound the due
Of preter sense, and participle too.

Dr. Lowth also protested against this usage, and declared: 'This abuse has been long growing upon us, and is continually

making further encroachments.' On the other hand, Horne Tooke, in the *Diversions of Purley* (1786), maintained that it was not a growing usage, but one which had greatly decreased; that it was not an innovation, but 'the idiom of the language'; and that examples of it might be given 'from every writer in the English tongue'. The pioneer of English philology was right. Byrom was mistaken in thinking the usage of recent introduction. It occurs more or less in all English writers until the middle of the eighteenth century. So Shakespeare, where Queen Katherine says in *Henry VIII* (ii, 4, 30):

Or which of your friends
Have I not *strove* to love, although I knew
He were mine enemy?

and where Edmund says in *King Lear* (i, 2, 93):

I dare pawn down my life for him, that he hath *wrote* this to feel
my affection to your honour.

And often in Dryden:

I made a sacred and a solemn vow
To offer up the prisoners that were *took*.
(*Indian Queen*, ii, 1.)

Nevertheless, I have a strong impression that the practice of using the preterite instead of the participle was commoner in the early eighteenth century than it had ever been before, and I would suggest that this was because the age had become sensitive to the confusion, and was endeavouring to reach a consistent usage—either by making the preterite regularly serve instead of the participle, as the Wesleys did, or by distinguishing regularly between them—the usage which finally prevailed. Lowth and Byrom felt that the use of the preterite for the participle was becoming more common, as in some writers it probably was, through an effort after consistency, and they concluded that it was a new abuse, which it was not.

There are also a few examples in the hymns of words which

were pronounced differently in the days of the Wesleys. This is rather an interesting detail. I have carefully examined all the rhymes in Pope, and all the rhymes in the *Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists* of 1780, and classified the results. The following notes, I think, deal with every example where there is an obvious difference between the pronunciation of the Wesleys and that of our own day.

The most outstanding case is the rhyme which is found in innumerable examples like:

Happy the souls to Jesus *joined*
 And saved by faith alone:
 Walking in all His ways they *find*
 Their heaven on earth begun.

The Wesleys rhyme 'join' with *design, divine, mine, shine, thine, wine, vine*; and 'joined' with *assigned, combined, find, kind, mind*. The same thing is found constantly in Pope, as in the lines in the *Dunciad*:

Behold yon pair in strict embraces *joined*,
 How like in manners, and how like in *mind*!

Pope rhymes 'join' with *design, dine, divine, line, mine, nine, Proserpine, shine, and thine*, and 'joined' with *defined, find, mankind, mind, and refined*. He also rhymes 'coin' with *design* and *dine*, and 'spoiled' with *Wild*, the name of the famous criminal of the eighteenth century, while at other times he rhymes 'wild' and 'child' with *smiled*. The Wesleys also rhyme 'spoiled' with *child*, and 'smile' with *oil*.

By a process which began, apparently, early in the sixteenth century, the Middle English *i* became a diphthong, *ai* or *æi*, and by late in the next century it was identical in pronunciation with the old French diphthong *oi* in a word like 'join', which was pronounced džain, while 'line' was pronounced læin. Rhymes such as those quoted above are found in the poets from Spenser down to at least the middle of the eighteenth century.

The present-day pronunciation of words in *oi* is a 'restored' pronunciation, due to the spelling. Kenrick, who wrote in 1773, says that it is an affectation to pronounce 'boil', 'join' otherwise than *bile*, *jine*, and yet he condemns the practice of pronouncing 'oil', 'toil', as *ile*, *tile*. This shows that the newer pronunciation was spreading in his day, but was not as yet universal. There is another piece of evidence that the later eighteenth century was beginning to distinguish the two sounds in the fact that in 1787 the eccentric philologist James Elphinston criticized Pope for the rhyme:

While feeble expletives their aid do *join*,
And ten low words oft creep in one dull *line*.

But the Wesleys used the pronunciation that was current in their earlier life, as represented above in phonetic spelling, and said what may be roughly suggested to the non-technical reader as something between *join* and *jine* for 'join', something between *divine* and *divoine* for 'divine', something between *spoil* and *spile* for 'spoil', and something between *smile* and *smoil* for 'smile'. This intermediate sound is still found in some dialects, especially in the Midlands, where, for example, 'side' is pronounced like *saoide*.

The Wesleys also repeatedly rhyme 'pour' with *shower*, as in the quatrain:

Lo! the promise of a *shower*
Drops already from above;
But the Lord will shortly *pour*
All the spirit of His love!

Pope occasionally does the same thing, as in the lines:

Ye heav'ns! from high the dewy nectar *pour*
And in soft silence shed the kindly *show'r*!

The same pronunciation of *ou* is in evidence when the Wesleys repeatedly rhyme 'wound' (the noun, but in one case also the related verb) with *abound*, *bound*, *found*. So in the lines:

Who, who, my Saviour, this has done?
 Who could Thy sacred body *wound*?
 No guilt Thy spotless heart hath known,
 No guile hath in Thy lips been *found*.

Pope again does the same thing, as in the couplet from *Messiah*:

In adamantine chains shall death be *bound*
 And hell's grim tyrant feel th' eternal *wound*!

Pope rhymes the noun 'wound' in different places with *bound*, *found*, *rebound*, and *sound*.

The old pronunciation survives in some dialects, and there are some parallels and survivals in standard English. The preterites of the verbs 'bind', 'find', 'wind' are still pronounced *bownd*, *fownd*, *wownd*, and the noun 'wound' and the related verb 'wound' (used of bodily injury) (from the Middle English *wund*, *wūnden*) used to be pronounced in the same way. So the old oath, 'Zounds!' is really for 'God's wounds!' pronounced 'God's *wounds*'.

Then the Wesleys repeatedly rhyme 'convert' with *art*, *heart*, and *part*, and twice they rhyme 'exert' with *heart*. It is evident that they pronounced the word 'convert', *convart*, as is shown by lines like:

Stone to flesh, O God, *convert*,
 Cast a look, and break my *heart*!

I think Pope never uses 'convert' in a rhyme, but he rhymes *desert* and *heart*, *observe* and *starve*, *reserve* and *starve*. He evidently pronounced the words, *desart*, *obsarve*, *resarve*. This is proved by such lines as:

Who would not praise Patritio's high *desert*,
 His hand unstained, his uncorrupted *heart*,

and:

And all mankind might that just mean *observe*,
 In which none e'er could surfeit, none could *starve*.

It has been pointed out that the eighteenth-century Lady

Wentworth (in the *Wentworth Papers*) regularly wrote *sarve*, *sarvents*, *sartainly*, for *serve*, *servants*, *certainly*. This pronunciation has survived in various dialects, and has left some traces in standard modern English. We still spell 'clerk' and pronounce *clark* (and in the family name 'Clark', 'Clarke', the *a* has been retained in spelling), for though the word is from *clericus*, the Middle English *clerk* later became *clark*, and the *a* sound has maintained itself, as it has also done in 'Derby' and 'Berkshire', from the later Middle English forms *Darbi*, *Barkschire*, though the earlier forms were the Norse *Deoraby* and the Anglo-Saxon *Berrocysyre*.

Then the Wesleys occasionally rhyme 'great' with *feet*, though they also rhyme it with *state*, and Pope rhymes 'great' with *cheat*, *complete*, and *treat*, and also with *state*. Charles Wesley wrote:

The joy, neither angel nor saint,
Can bear so ineffably *great*,
But lo! the whole company faint,
And heaven is found—at His *feet*.

and Pope:

Have you less pity for the needy *cheat*,
The poor and friendless villain, than the *great*?

Apparently the Wesleys pronounced 'great' *greet*. Dr. Johnson once discussed the rhymes which occur in Rowe, *seat*, *great*, and in Pope, *state*, *great*, in a way that shows that some people in his day pronounced 'great' *greet*, and others in the modern fashion.

In the seventeenth century Florio identifies the sound of the open Italian *o* with that found in the words *God*, *stone*, *tone*, and in the same century Price makes the express statement that the words *God* and *goad* were pronounced alike. Milton rhymes 'God' with *load*, as Dryden does with *abode*, and Pope with *road*. Apparently the Wesleys used the old pronunciation, for though they sometimes rhyme 'God' with *rod*, which would give the modern sound (and occasionally use words to rhyme

with 'God' which are obviously imperfect rhymes, like *blood*, *flood*, *loud*, *void*); they generally rhyme 'God' with *abroad*, *bestowed*, *load*, *road*, *rode*, *showed*. Thus, for example:

Why will ye folly love,
And throng the downward *road*,
And hate the wisdom from above,
And mock the sons of *God*?

Pope occasionally does the same thing, as in the lines from the *Essay on Man*:

Slave to no sect, who takes no private *road*,
But looks through nature up to nature's *God*.

Mostly, however, Pope rhymes the word 'God' with words like *nod*, *rod*, *trod*.

It looks as if the older pronunciation was already giving way in the middle of the eighteenth century, and being replaced by the modern usage, with the result that for a time there was some variation and uncertainty as between the two pronunciations 'Göd' and 'Gōd'.

Then there are to be added a few more words where the change of pronunciation is apparent not because of the rhyme, but because of the fall of the accent. These are *acceptable*, *cémented*, *confessor*, *obdúrate*, *successor*. One example from the hymns is given in each case.

Thus we have:

Thou our sacrifice receive,
Acceptable through Thy Son:
While to Thee alone we live,
While we die to Thee alone.

This is the older pronunciation, as in Milton, *Paradise Lost* (x, 139):

Thy perfect gift, so good,
So fit, so acceptable, so divine.

So also in:

Cémented by love divine,
Seal our souls for ever Thine!

This is the older pronunciation, as in Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra* (ii, 1, 48):

The fear of us
May cément their divisions, and bind up
The petty difference.

The pronunciation seems to have been giving way before Wesley's time. Witness the lines of Swift in the *City Shower* (1710):

Sole coat! where dust cemented by the rain,
Erects the nap, and leaves a cloudy stain!

But the old pronunciation is found in Cowper, where he describes the famous ice palace erected on the banks of the Neva in 1740, by the order of the Empress Anna. The passage is in *The Task* (v, 146-8):

Ice upon ice, the well-adjusted parts
Were soon conjoined, nor other cément asked
Than water interfused to make them one.

The Wesleys always use the older accentuation of 'confessor', as in:

Thou, who hast kept us to this hour,
O keep us faithful to the end!
When, robed with majesty and power,
Our Jesus shall from heaven descend,
His friends and conféssors to own,
And seat us on His glorious throne.

This is the historical pronunciation, which did not give way until the beginning of the nineteenth century. After this, for a while, both pronunciations were current, and there was an attempt to distinguish the two senses of the word by the differing accents—confessor, one who bears his witness for religion in the face of danger, which is the meaning of the word in the lines of Wesley that have been quoted—conféssor, one who makes or receives confession of a fault.

But Wesley's pronunciation was universal up to his time. So in Dryden, *The Hind and the Panther* (iii, 209-10) (using the word in the second sense):

For sundry years before did he complain,
And told his ghostly confessor his pain.

Then there is 'obdurate':

Give the sweet relenting grace,
Soften this obdurate stone!

This is the older pronunciation, as always in Shakespeare and Milton. So in *Paradise Lost* (i, 56-8):

His baleful eyes,
That witnessed huge affliction and dismay,
Mixed with obdurate pride and steadfast hate.

And, finally, there is 'successor':

Where shall I wander now to find
The successors they left behind?

This again is the older pronunciation, as in Dryden, *Secret Love* (v, 1-2):

I here declare you rightful successor,
And heir immediate to my crown.

THE HYMNS AND CONTEMPORARY EVENTS

THERE were two controversial movements more or less within the Methodist Societies, during the lifetime of the Wesleys, that threatened to wreck their work. The first emanated from Molther and the Moravians; the second from Whitefield and his followers. Both have left considerable traces in the hymns. Indeed, many of the hymns can hardly be understood aright apart from this background.

The first controversy that arose was about 'stillness'. It was this perverted Quietism, introduced by Molther, which caused the breach with the Moravians, and gave the Wesleys a great deal of trouble for some years afterwards, especially in 1739 and 1740.

Those who came under the spell made much of the text—the *locus classicus* of Quietism—'Be still, and know that I am God'. 'Stillness' meant to cease from the means of grace, and even from the reading of the Scriptures and prayer, because of the peril of trusting in them. Those who were 'still' would call themselves nothing but 'poor sinners' or 'happy sinners'—greatly to the disgust of honest John Nelson, whose robust common sense held 'the poor sinnership' in hearty contempt.¹ Two passages from Charles Wesley's *Journal* for 1740 will sufficiently illustrate the situation and the peril. April 8: 'I got home, weary, wounded, bruised, and faint, through the contradiction of sinners; *poor* sinners, as they call themselves, these heady, violent, fierce contenders for stillness. I could not

¹ See Wesley's *Journal* (Standard Edition), i, p. 430, ii, pp. 312-16, 328-9, 463-4, iii, pp. 66, 106, 112, 176, 220, 258, 503. *The Lives of the Early Methodist Preachers*, i, pp. 32, 50.

bear the thought of meeting them again.' April 25: 'Many here [in London] insist that a part of their Christian calling is liberty *from* obeying, not liberty *to* obey. The unjustified, say they, are *to be still*: that is, not to search the Scriptures, not to pray, not to communicate, not to do good, not to endeavour, not to desire: for it is impossible to use means without trusting in them. Their practice is agreeable to their principles. Lazy and proud themselves, bitter and censorious toward others, they trample upon the ordinances and despise the commands of Christ.'

About a year later, despite what he had written in the passage quoted here, Charles Wesley was almost carried away by 'stillness'. This was in the early part of 1741. His *Journal* for January, February and March in that year is not extant: no doubt it has been deliberately destroyed. But it is easy enough to see the state of the case. Molther, who was the real apostle of 'stillness', had gone back to Germany, and Böhler, to whom the Wesleys owed so much, was left as the leader of the Moravians. He held that Molther's teaching had been misunderstood, and it was Böhler's influence, along with that of Gambold and Hall (who was the brother-in-law of the Wesleys) which almost prevailed to win over Charles Wesley. In January, 1741, he was delivering a series of expository discourses on the First Epistle of St. John, in the Foundery, at five o'clock in the morning. He stopped in the middle of one of these, and stated that he would not proceed any further. John Wesley heard of this, and hurried from Bristol to London. The next day after his arrival he wrote in his *Journal*, under the date January 22, 1741: 'I began expounding where my brother had left off, viz. at the fourth chapter of the First Epistle of St. John. He had not preached the morning before, nor intended to do it any more. "The Philistines are upon thee, Samson." But the Lord is not "departed from thee". He shall strengthen thee yet again, and thou shalt be "avenged of them for the loss of thy eyes".'

Three weeks later Charles Wesley had evidently recovered

from his passing aberration. John Wesley wrote in his *Journal* on February 12, 1741: 'My brother returned from Oxford, and preached on the true way of waiting for God, thereby dispelling at once the fears of some and the vain hopes of others, who had confidently affirmed that Mr. Charles Wesley was *still* already, and would come to London no more.'¹

There are many allusions to 'stillness' in the hymns. One is headed 'The Means of Grace':

Still for Thy loving kindness, Lord,
 I in Thy Temple wait:
 I look to find Thee in Thy word,
 Or at Thy table meet.
 Here in Thine own appointed ways
 I wait to learn Thy will;
 Silent I stand before Thy face,
 And hear Thee say, 'Be still!'
 'Be still, and know that I am God!'
 'Tis all I live to know!
 To feel the virtue of Thy blood,
 And spread its praise below!

Another hymn has the lines:

Place no longer let us give
 To the old Tempter's will:
 Never more our duty leave,
 While Satan cries, 'Be still!'
 Stand we in the ancient way,
 And here with God ourselves acquaint;
 Pray we, every moment pray,
 And never, never faint.

Another hymn is a lament over those who had lapsed into 'stillness':

Whom still we love with grief and pain,
 And weep for their return in vain.

¹ Wesley's *Journal* (Standard Edition), ii, pp. 417, 424. Jackson, *Life of Charles Wesley*, i, pp. 273-4.

In vain, till Thou the power bestow,
 The double power of quickening grace!
 And make the *happy sinners* know
 Their Tempter, with his angel face;
 Who leads them captive at his will,
 Captive—but *happy sinners* still!¹

Another is entitled 'A Poor Sinner':

I would be truly still,
 Nor set a time to Thee,
 But act according to Thy will,
 And speak, and think, and be.

I would with Thee be one;
 And till the grace is given,
 Incessant pray, Thy will be done,
 In earth as 'tis in heaven.

The other movement was the Calvinistic propaganda. Many of the hymns of Methodism reflect the life-long controversy of the Wesleys with the Calvinists.

It was undoubtedly these great hymns that were largely accountable for the diffusion of Arminian doctrine throughout evangelical Christendom. In this respect they mark a theological epoch. For the work of the Wesleys was the death of Calvinism, or at least of its baser nature. There could be no more striking evidence of this, which is the principal achievement of Methodism in the theological realm, than the fact that many of these hymns are used to-day, and used by those religious communities which have a Calvinist tradition, without any realization of their polemical intention. They seem to be the natural utterance of what all evangelical Christians to-day believe. Think of the first of the *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love* as it was printed in 1741; here are some of the stanzas, with the original italics:

¹ The two hymns last quoted were appended (with three others) to a tract entitled *A Short View of the Difference between the Moravian Brethren lately in England and the Rev. Mr. John and Charles Wesley*. It appeared in 1745.

Father, whose *everlasting love*
 Thy only Son for sinners gave,
 Whose grace to *all* did *freely* move,
 And sent Him down *a world to save*.

Help us Thy mercy to extol,
 Immense, unfathom'd, unconfined;
 To praise the Lamb who *died for all*,
 The *general Saviour of mankind*.

Thy *undistinguishing regard*
 Was cast on *Adam's* fallen race;
 For *all* Thou hast in Christ prepared
Sufficient, sovereign, saving grace.

Jesus hath said, we *all* shall hope,
 Preventing grace for all is free,
 'And I, if I be lifted up,
 I will *draw all men* unto Me.'

A world He suffer'd to redeem;
 For *all* He hath the atonement made;
 For those that *will not come* to Him
 The ransom of His life was paid.

Unless it were pointed out to them, or unless they happened to notice the significance of Wesley's italics, very few readers to-day would realize that all these phrases are express challenges to Calvinist doctrine as it was held in the eighteenth century.

The Calvinism that survives in the world to-day is a thing refined, rarefied. The baser sort of Calvinism is so utterly extinct in our days—thanks to Methodism—that it is difficult for us to realize that it ever existed. The purified spirit of Calvinism that lives in the modern representatives of the Reformed Churches we can admire greatly. The deep sense of the sinfulness of sin, the profound apprehension of grace as utterly and unutterably undeserved, the humility and the reverence which attend upon these thoughts—all these are spiritual characteristics for which we cannot be too thankful.

And we could willingly detect more of all these notes in modern religion.¹

There, indeed, lies at once the source and the strength of all that is best in Calvinism. The doctrine of Calvin is the doctrine of Augustine, extended to its relentless issue, and it is in the religious experience of Augustine that we must seek the germ of his doctrine. It was Augustine's deep conviction of sin and his sense of absolute helplessness apart from the overmastering and overwhelming grace of God—it was this, passing into his writings, and, after many centuries, developed with pitiless logic, by a mind much more formal and much less subtle than his, which became Calvinism. At this time of day we can afford to recognize that the noble source of the doctrinal perversion was nothing less than that deep instinct of the Christian soul which is expressed in the language of Toplady:

*Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy Cross I cling!*

This is the better side: there was a worse. There is plentiful evidence of that in the early literature of Methodism. Charles Wesley once quoted from Calvin's *Institutes* (l. iii, c. 24) a frightful passage concerning the reprobate, 'God speaketh to them that they may be the deafer: He gives light to them that they may be the blinder; He offers instruction to them that they may be the more ignorant; and uses the remedy that they may *not* be healed.' And elsewhere the poet of Methodism records that during his exposition of a controverted passage of Scripture at Bristol one of his hearers '*even called for damnation upon his own soul if Christ died for all, and if God was willing*

¹ It is one of the proudest memories of my life that these paragraphs, when I first wrote them more than thirty years ago, were warmly welcomed by that very great man, Dr. Alexander Whyte, who represented so nobly, in that generation, all that was best in Calvinism. His generous words are to be found in his study of John Wesley in *Thirteen Appreciations*, p. 379.

THAT ALL MEN SHOULD BE SAVED'. This was the faith, and this the temper of eighteenth-century Calvinism. And this was where the early Methodists joined issue with the 'doctrines of grace'. What the Wesleys contended for was a universal gospel; what they denied vehemently was that doctrine of election which, as John Wesley said, amounted to this: 'One in twenty (suppose) of mankind are elected; nineteen in twenty are reprobated. The elect shall be saved, do what they will; the reprobate shall be damned, do what they can.'

It is characteristic that the reasons for which the Wesleys opposed Calvinism were all practical reasons. It disturbed the peace of the Societies, and they were forced to fight it for the sake of peace. It appeared amongst the early Methodists as an alien propaganda, and it had to be encountered. Then it led undoubtedly to serious laxity of conduct; the Antinomian peril was very real in the early days of Methodism, and it was largely the result of Predestinarian doctrine. Antinomianism was not then the mere ghost of dead heresy or the bold paradox of exalted pietism, but a hideous danger, which the Wesleys met everywhere. And then the doctrinal grounds of opposition were also practical. Neither of the Wesleys had much interest in speculative theology. But they preached an illimitable salvation; they denied that there was any limit whatever to the gospel, except such as was set by the unwillingness of men to accept salvation. They taught that the forgiving love of God was boundless.

The literature of the controversy between Methodism and Calvinism is to-day largely forgotten. It is as well so. The pamphlets and sermons of 1740 and 1770, the publications of Wesley, Fletcher, and Olivers on the one side, and of Whitefield, Toplady, and Sir Richard Hill on the other, have only an antiquarian interest. All that really survives to-day from that remote contest is a batch of hymns—Toplady's 'Rock of Ages, cleft for me', and many of the stirring stanzas that Charles Wesley wrote at the time. Several of these familiar hymns, indeed, can scarcely be understood as they

ought unless we remember the implicit protest against a limited gospel which they contain, in stanzas like:

O for a trumpet voice,
On *all the world* to call!
To bid their hearts rejoice
In Him who died for *all*;
For *all* my Lord was crucified,
For *all*, for *all* my Saviour died!

and:

O let Thy love my heart constrain!
Thy love for *every* sinner free,
That *every* fallen soul of man
May taste the grace that found out me;
That *all mankind* with me may prove
Thy sovereign everlasting love.

But if it be asked where in these hymns of controversy Charles Wesley's most effective protest against the doctrine of Calvin is to be found, there can be little doubt, I think, that it is in precisely those lines which express the deepest depth of humility, the lines in which he writes of the grace of God:

Throughout the world its breadth is known,
Wide as infinity;
*So wide, it never passed by one,
Or it had passed by me.*

Then, altogether apart from these religious controversies of the time, there are many other hymns that are topical, in the sense that they reflect current events in the national life of that period. Thus in 1739 Walpole was forced, against his own better judgement, to declare war on Spain—the war of ‘Jenkins’ Ear’. When the bells were rung in the general rejoicing over this decision, it is said that he remarked, ‘They are ringing their bells now, but soon they will be wringing their hands.’ That prophecy was soon fulfilled, but the war was successful in the early stages, and Admiral Vernon’s capture of Porto Bello in 1739 was the occasion for a tre-

mendous outburst of patriotic enthusiasm. Henry Carey wrote a song to celebrate the victor's return, and it became extremely popular:

He comes! he comes! the hero comes!
Sound your trumpets, beat your drums!
From port to port let cannons roar
His welcome to the British shore.

Charles Wesley wrote a hymn on the Last Judgement the first lines of which were suggested by the song, and the Methodists adapted Carey's tune to the words:

He comes! He comes! the Judge severe,
The seventh trumpet speaks Him near;
His lightnings flash, His thunders roll,
How welcome to the faithful soul!

A small pamphlet with the title *Hymns for Times of Trouble, for the Year 1745* appeared in that year. It contained fifteen hymns. The occasion of this publication, of course, was the 'Forty-Five Rebellion. The only verses worth noticing in this batch are those which make the noble hymn:

Head of Thy Church triumphant,
We joyfully adore Thee;
Till Thou appear
Thy members here
Shall sing like those in glory.

The occasion of a whole series of hymns was an event of a very different kind which happened some five years later. About midday on February 8, 1750, London was startled by an earthquake. John Wesley wrote in his *Journal* on the same day: 'It was about a quarter after twelve that the earthquake began at the skirts of the town. It began in the south-east, went through Southwark, under the river, and then from one end of London to the other. It was observed at Westminster and Grosvenor Square a quarter before one. (Perhaps, if we

allow for the difference of the clocks, about a quarter of an hour after it began in Southwark.) There were three distinct shakes, or wavings to and fro, attended with an hoarse rumbling noise, like thunder. How gently does God deal with this nation! O that our repentance may prevent heavier marks of His displeasure!

A month later a more violent earthquake occurred early in the morning. Charles Wesley was preaching at the Foundery and was actually giving out his text at the moment of the shock. John Wesley was in Bristol on this date, and he wrote in his *Journal*: 'To-day God gave the people of London a second warning, of which my brother wrote as follows: "This morning, a quarter after five, we had another shock of an earthquake, far more violent than that of February 8. I was just repeating my text when it shook the Foundery so violently that we all expected it to fall upon our heads. A great cry followed from the women and children. I immediately cried out, 'Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be moved, and the hills be carried into the midst of the sea; for the Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.' He filled my heart with faith, and my mouth with words, shaking their souls as well as their bodies! The earth moved westward, then east, then westward again, through all London and Westminster. It was a strong and jarring motion, attended with a rumbling noise, like that of distant thunder. Many houses were much shaken, and some chimneys thrown down, but without any further hurt." '

These shocks of earthquake, though not disastrously severe, naturally occasioned much consternation, and this was increased when a soldier in the Horse Guards (who was manifestly insane and was later sent to Bedlam) prophesied that on the fourth of April there would be another earthquake which would destroy half of the Metropolis. When the fateful night arrived thousands of people thronged Tower Hill, Moorfields, Hyde Park, and other open spaces. George Whitefield preached to the multitude in Hyde Park, and Charles Wesley preached

again at the Foundery. Almost immediately after these events he published a pamphlet with the quaint title, *Hymns occasioned by the Earthquake, March 8, 1750*; it contained about a score of hymns. None of these is of the first quality, and none has passed into general use among Methodists, except the very fine hymn:

How weak the thoughts, and vain,
Of self-deluding men!
Men who, fixed to earth alone,
Think their houses shall endure,
Fondly call their lands their own,
To their distant heirs secure.

Six years later, in a subsequent edition of the pamphlet, another hymn was added, with the heading, 'Occasioned by the Destruction of Lisbon'. It begins:

Woe to the men on earth who dwell,
Nor dread the Almighty's frown;
When God doth all His wrath reveal,
And shower His judgements down!

The fearful earthquake at Lisbon occurred on November 1, 1755. It was estimated that sixty thousand people lost their lives in this dreadful disaster, which (in the words of Goethe, who was so deeply impressed by it as a boy) 'spread a mighty terror over the whole world'.

Charles Wesley wrote many verses dealing with the political events of his time, and the affairs of the nations. These are generally uninspired, and sometimes they are singularly wrong-headed. Frederick the Great, for example, is regarded as a Protestant paladin. One hymn is entitled 'For the King of Prussia', and the language of it would have amazed Frederick almost as much as it amazes us. The verses were written before the Battle of Rossbach in 1757, when Prussia's fortunes were at the lowest ebb. The help of God is invoked for 'the man of Thy right hand' and 'the champion of religion pure', and one verse ends with the prayer:

Arm him with Thine and Gideon's sword,
To fight the battles of the Lord!

Some of the hymns were occasioned by events and experiences in the personal life of the Wesleys. Many examples might be given, but perhaps the two following will suffice as quaint illustration of the times in which the Wesleys lived, and of the early suspicions about them and their work. There is a passage of Scripture, reflected in many of the hymns, which has a singular connection with one of these events in Charles Wesley's life. It is the word spoken to David by the woman of Tekoa: 'Neither doth God respect any person, yet doth He devise means, that His banished be not expelled from Him' (2 Samuel xiv. 14). This is recalled many times in the verse of the Wesleys, as in John Wesley's translation of one of Zinzendorf's hymns:

O let the dead now hear Thy voice,
Now bid *Thy banished ones* rejoice,
Their beauty this, their glorious dress,
Jesu, Thy blood and righteousness!

This Scriptural phrase, always a favourite with both brothers, links up with the extraordinary story of the charge of treason lodged against Charles Wesley at Wakefield in 1744. A justice of the peace there had summoned certain persons to appear before him at the White Hart Inn to give information 'against one Westley, or any other of the Methodist speakers, for speaking any treasonable words or exhortations, as praying for the banished, or the Pretender'. The only witness who could be induced to speak at all said: 'I have nothing to say against the gentleman: I only heard him pray the Lord would call home His banished.' One of the magistrates, a clergyman of the name of Zouch, asked the witness: 'But were there no words before or after, which pointed to these troublesome times?' 'No,' said the witness; 'none at all.' Then Charles Wesley said: 'It was on February 12, before the earliest news of the invasion. . . . I had no thoughts of praying for the Pretender, but for those that confess themselves strangers and

pilgrims upon earth, who seek a country, knowing this is not their place. The Scriptures, you, sir, know' (to the clergyman), 'speak of us as captive exiles, who are absent from the Lord while in the body. We are not at home till we are in heaven.' The clerical magistrate said: 'I thought you would so explain the words, and it is a fair interpretation.' Wesley then asked if the magistrates were all satisfied. They said that they were, and 'cleared him as fully as he desired'. Whereupon he rode off to Birstall. This incident was the occasion of a hymn with the title, 'Written on Going to Wakefield to answer a Charge of Treason', but it is not worth quoting. Another hymn is headed 'Occasioned by an Irish Judge sentencing me in my Absence to Transportation'. There had been savage rioting against the Methodists in Cork in 1749. No action was taken against the rioters at the time, but at the next Assizes twenty-eight depositions were laid before the Grand Jury relative to the disorders. These were all thrown out, and then the jury, with an amazing disregard of both law and reason, proceeded to state: 'We find and present Charles Wesley to be a person of ill fame, a vagabond, and a common disturber of His Majesty's peace, and we pray that he may be transported.' The hymn which was written on this occasion, like most of these occasional verses, is quite unworthy of Charles Wesley's genius.

He rose to far greater heights in some of the hymns which recall the splendid evangelism of the early Methodists in the jails of London, especially Newgate, where Silas Told did so much of his apostolic work. The penal code of the eighteenth century was so savage that highway robbery, sheep-stealing, forgery, arson, the theft of any larger sum than forty shillings, and a dozen other offences, were all punishable by death. The result was that the wretched jails were always crowded with men awaiting execution, and every six weeks some were hanged at Tyburn—sometimes a dozen or a score in a single day. Charles Wesley issued a pamphlet in 1785 entitled *Prayers for Condemned Malefactors*, containing some sixteen hymns. Appended to one of these, which ends with the verse—

And if I may not testify
 On earth my sins forgiven,
 Yet I, the poorest outcast I,
 May praise Thy love in heaven,

is the pathetic note: 'These prayers were answered, Thursday, April 28th, 1785, on nineteen malefactors, who all died penitent. Not unto me, O Lord; not unto me!' But the noblest of all these hymns is one entitled 'For Condemned Malefactors', which appeared in the *Hymns and Sacred Poems* of 1749. It has some moving lines which utter with a strange poignancy the central message of the Gospel:

We have no outward righteousness,
 No merits, or good works to plead;
 We only can be saved by grace;
 Thy grace will here be free indeed.
 Canst Thou reject our dying prayer,
 Or cast us out who come to Thee?
 Our sins, ah! wherefore didst Thou bear!
 Jesu, remember Calvary!
 O might we with our closing eyes
 Thee in Thy bloody vesture see,
 And cast us on Thy sacrifice;
 Jesus, my Lord, remember me!

Many a penitent felon died at Tyburn with these last words on his lips, for the first trophies of the gospel in the earliest days of Methodism were like the dying robber at our Lord's side on Calvary, and there is a lesson here for all believers to learn. The epitaph of Copernicus over his grave in the Johannis-kirche at Thorn is:

Non parem Pauli gratiam requiro
 Veniam Petri neque posco, sed quam
 In crucis ligno dederas latroni
 Sedulus oro,

which may be rendered:

Ah, not the grace which lifted Paul to heaven,
 Nor that the pitying Lord to Peter gave,
 But what the robber on the Cross was given—
 This would I crave!

THE HYMNS AND THE SCRIPTURES

'IN the year 1729', wrote John Wesley, 'I began not only to *read* but to *study* the Bible.' The results of that devoted study of the Word of God are to be seen in every page that he wrote. Both the brothers must have had a most profound, exact, and extensive acquaintance with the Scriptures. Indeed, it is only a close study of the Bible on our own part that can reveal to us the extent of their intimacy with it. There can hardly be a single paragraph anywhere in the Scriptures that is not somewhere reflected in the writings of the Wesleys. The hymns, in many cases, are a mere mosaic of Biblical allusions. Here is a stanza—and many others would have served equally well—where there is a distinct quotation of Scripture in every line:

Behold the servant of the Lord!
 I wait Thy guiding eye to feel,
 To hear and keep Thy every word,
 To prove and do Thy perfect will,
 Joyful from my own works to cease,
 Glad to fulfil all righteousness.

These six lines recall the following six passages in the Authorized Version:

'And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord' (Luke i. 38).

'I will guide thee with Mine eye' (Psalm xxxii. 8).

'If a man love Me he will keep My words' (John xiv. 23).

'That ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God' (Romans xii. 2).

'For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His' (Hebrews iv. 10).

'For thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness' (Matthew, iii. 15).

Dr. W. F. Moulton, the eminent Biblical scholar, once worked out a long list of Scriptural references in the hymn, 'With glorious clouds encompassed round, Whom angels dimly see'. Some of these are rather faint, but there are clear allusions to at least the following passages: Genesis xxxii. 29; Job xi. 7, xxv. 6; Psalm xcvi. 2; Isaiah vi. 2, lii. 14, liii. 3, 5; Micah vii. 18; John i. 14; Acts xx. 28; Ephesians iii. 18, 19; 1 John iv. 9; Revelation vi. 6, xix. 12, 13. That is to say, there are at least fourteen unmistakable quotations of passages in the Bible in the thirty-two lines of the hymn.

Even more impressive than a mere list of references is the way in which one allusion to Scripture calls up in the memory of Charles Wesley a number of passages which contain a similar thought or employ a similar metaphor. Thus in the first line of a famous quatrain he had in mind the passage in Psalm xxvi. 9, 'For with Thee is the fountain of life', and this reminds him instinctively of three other places in Scripture where the thought of a living spring occurs: 'Let him take the water of life freely' (Revelation xxii. 17); 'Then sang Israel this song, Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it' (Numbers xxi. 17); 'The water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life' (John iv. 14). It will be seen that all these are plainly recalled in the lines:

Thou of life the fountain art,
 Freely let me take of Thee,
 Spring Thou up within my heart,
 Rise to all eternity.

But the most interesting points with regard to the Wesleys and the Authorized Version are naturally their many divergencies from it. They often used, and sometimes deliberately preferred to use, the older version of the Psalms (substantially Coverdale's) which is retained in the Book of Common Prayer. As devout Churchmen they had been familiar with this from childhood,

and in many cases their use of it was doubtless merely casual. But there are other instances in which they remembered both versions, and combined or contrasted them.

Much of Charles Wesley's language and thought was coloured by renderings in this version. Thus the words of Psalm xxvii. 16, 'O tarry thou the Lord's leisure', are recalled in many of his verses:

Fainting soul, be bold, be strong,
Wait the leisure of thy Lord;
 Though it seem to tarry long,
 True and faithful is His word.

It was the influence of this passage of Scripture which led Charles Wesley to write many passages like the following, from which his brother strongly dissented. I append John Wesley's marginal notes in each case:

I set my God a time no more,*
 The kingdom when Thou wilt restore,
 And all Thy love reveal.

* *I do, if I put Him off.—J. W.*

Yet till Thy time is fully come,
 I dare not hastily presume†
 To snatch the perfect grace.

† *I dare say, NOW IS THE ACCEPTED TIME.—J. W.*

Closely connected with this notion is another, equally unfortunate—that God may arbitrarily withhold or withdraw His grace from the believing soul. This occurs many times, and John Wesley always enters a protest against the doctrine:

May'st Thou not still conceal Thy face,
 Withdraw the sweet delights of grace,
 And from Thine own depart?‡

‡ *No! not unprovoked.—J. W.*

From saints, if Thou withdraw Thy light,
 Their faith to try, their grace to improve,§
 Yet sin alone brought back my night,
 And robbed me of Thy pardoning love.

§ *Never.—J. W.*

I now Thy love's design perceive;
 Me to myself Thy love hath shown,
 Thou didst in love Thy servant leave,||
 To come again and claim Thine own.

|| *Never.—J. W.*

The language of Psalm xlv. 4, 'Gird Thee with Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O Thou most Mighty, according to Thy worship and renown', is closely paraphrased in a fine hymn:

*Gird on Thy thigh the Spirit's sword,
 And take to Thee Thy power divine;
 Stir up Thy strength, Almighty Lord,
 All power and majesty are Thine;
 Assert Thy worship and renown:
 O all-redeeming God, come down!*

In a poetical paraphrase of Psalm lxxxiv, both versions of the eleventh verse are utilized, 'For the Lord God is a light and a defence' (P.B.V.), 'For the Lord God is a sun and shield' (A.V.):

The Lord protects and cheers His own,
Their light and strength, their shield and sun:
 He shall both grace and glory give.

The earlier version of Psalm xcix. 1, 'The Lord is King, be the people never so impatient', is remembered in the opening verse of a hymn—

*The Lord is King, and earth submits,
 Howe'er impatient, to His sway,
 Between the cherubim He sits,
 And makes His restless foes obey.*

So a clause from Psalm cxxxix. 23, 'Try me, O God, and seek the ground of my heart', is remembered in another hymn—

*Try us, O God, and search the ground
Of every sinful heart!
Whate'er of sin in us is found,
O bid it all depart!*

Another hymn begins, in the modern hymnals:

Jesus, Thou knowest my sinfulness,
My faults are not concealed from Thee,

but Charles Wesley wrote *simpleness*, and the word was altered to *sinfulness* by some editor who was unaware that the words were a remembrance of the Prayer Book Version of Psalm lxix. 5: 'God, Thou knowest my *simpleness*, and my faults are not hid from Thee.' The Authorized Version has 'foolishness'.

Scores of other phrases in the hymns show the influence of this translation. Thus in Psalm xxviii. 8, where the Authorized Version has 'Therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth', the Prayer Book Version has, 'Therefore my heart danceth for joy', and this is recalled in the lines:

New songs do now his lips employ,
And *dances his glad heart for joy.*

In Psalm lvii. 1, where the Authorized Version reads 'until these calamities be overpast', the older version has 'until this tyranny be overpast', and this is reproduced in another hymn:

And let my soul on Thee be cast,
Till life's fierce tyranny be past.

The Authorized Version of Psalm lxxxix. 16 is, 'In Thy name shall they rejoice all the day', but the Prayer Book Version has 'Their delight shall be daily in Thy name' This, again, is echoed in a hymn:

*Their daily delight, Shall be in Thy name,
They shall as their right, Thy righteousness claim*

Many other examples might be quoted. There is one, however, of unusual interest. In Psalm lxxiv. 12, where the Authorized Version with the Hebrew, Septuagint, and Vulgate, has 'For God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth', the Prayer Book Version renders 'For God is my King of old; the help that is done upon earth, He doeth it Himself'. This is following Luther, *der alle Hilfe thut, so auf Erden geschieht*, and the Zurich Bible, *du der alles heyl und hilff (das in der gantzen welt geschieht) allein thust*.

It is reproduced in one of the hymns:

A feeble thing of nought,
With lowly shame I own
The help that upon earth is wrought
Thou dost it all alone.

John Wesley emphatically preferred this rendering. He wrote in his *Journal*, under the date September 14, 1785: 'I preached in the evening in the old Temple Church, on Psalm lxxiv. 12. In the old translation it runs, "The help that is done upon earth, God doeth it Himself". A glorious and important truth! In the new, "Working salvation in the midst of the earth". What a wonderful emendation! Many such emendations there are in this translation; one would think King James had made them himself.' In another passage in the *Journal*, a year and a half later, April 22, 1787, he refers to the text and translation again: 'I opened and applied that glorious text, "The help that is done upon earth, He doeth it Himself". Is it not strange that this text, Psalm lxxiv. 12, is vanished out of the new translation of the Psalms?'

Notwithstanding Wesley's uncritical scorn of the 'emendation', it is the only correct rendering. He was very old, and very busy, or a glance at his Hebrew Bible would have shown him that the Authorized Version was unquestionably right.

It is probable that neither of the Wesleys was a profound Hebraist, though John Wesley compiled a Hebrew Grammar, and discussed with zest the question of the vowel points. He

began his study of the language early enough, at any rate, for his elder brother Samuel, while Usher at Westminster School, in 1719, wrote to his father: 'Jack is a brave boy, learning Hebrew as fast as he can!'

There are a few apparent recollections of the original text of the Old Testament in the hymns. 'Open, Lord, my inward ear' is a beautiful exposition of the incident in 1 Kings xix. 11-12, and the lines—

*Still and silent is the sound,
The whisper of Thy grace,*

seem to suggest a remembrance of the Hebrew phrase, translated in the Authorized Version 'a still, small voice', but which is literally 'a sound of slight silence'. The Authorized Version of Isaiah ix. 3 is 'Thou hast multiplied the nation, and *not* increased the joy'. The Revised Version omits the negative, and this is obviously right, for the passage goes on: 'They joy before Thee according to the joy in harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.' The right reading was clearly in Charles Wesley's mind in a hymn on this text:

Thou, Lord, hast made Thy mercies known,
Hast added to the chosen race,
Enlarged, and multiplied Thine own,
And *fill'd their hearts with joy and praise.*

In another hymn on Isaiah ix. 6-7, there is a clear remembrance of the Hebrew text, for the words rendered 'The Everlasting Father' are literally 'Father of Eternity', and this is recalled in the lines:

The Almighty God is He,
Author of heavenly bliss,
The Father of Eternity,
The glorious Prince of Peace!

The Authorized Version of Psalm viii. 5 is 'For Thou hast made him a little lower than *the angels*', where the last word represents *elohim*, and the Revised Version renders 'but little lower than *God*'. The Hebrew text is recalled in the lines:

Foremost of created things,
 Nearest the great King of kings,
 Standing as at first we stood,
Made a little less than God!

and in some very similar lines which form part of a version of Psalm viii:

Foremost of created things,
 Head of all Thy works he stood,
 Nearest the great King of kings,
And little less than God!

Here a note is appended to the last line: 'So it is in the Hebrew.'

In the narrative of the death of Moses in Deuteronomy xxxiv. 5, there is a rather unusual construction in the Hebrew. The English versions read, quite correctly, 'So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab according to the word of the Lord', but here 'the *word* of the Lord' is not the usual *dabar*, but the much less common *peh* (literally, *mouth*), which occurs—in this sense—only twice in Deuteronomy, and only about a dozen times in the whole of the Old Testament. This passage, read as 'Moses died there *by the mouth* of the Lord', led to the beautiful Rabbinical legend that Moses died by the kiss of God.¹ There are references to this in several of the hymns, as in the lines:

Then, when the work is done,
 The work of faith with power,
 Receive Thy favoured son,
 In death's triumphant hour;
*Like Moses to Thyself convey,
 And kiss my raptured soul away!*

¹ There is a touching allusion to this legend in a letter of Thomas Erskine of Linlathen to Carlyle, written in 1869, in which he said that he 'prayed and hoped before long to die by the kiss of God'. There is also a reference to it in Frederick W. H. Myers' *Saint Paul* (127): 'Till Moses on the mountain, Died of the kisses of the lips of God.'

John Wesley must have had some familiarity with the Vulgate, if he took the paternal advice. His father wrote to him in 1724 counselling him to 'compare the Hebrew Bible, the Vulgate, and the Samaritan in the Polyglott' as 'the best commentary on the Bible'. A year later his father wrote again, telling him of a design for an edition of the Bible 'in Hebrew, Chaldee, Seventy and Vulgar Latin', in which he has 'made some progress', and he wants John to 'fall to work, read diligently the Hebrew text in the Polyglott, and collate it exactly with the Vulgar Latin, . . . writing down all (even the least) variations'.

There seems to be a recollection of the Vulgate in the lines:

Thou God of glorious majesty,
To Thee, *against myself*, to Thee,
A worm of earth I cry!

which appears to reflect the language of Psalm xxxii. 5, *Confitebor adversum me injustitiam meam Domino*. The passage does not read so either in the Hebrew or in the Authorized Version, or in the Prayer Book Version (the Vulgate *adversum me* is after the LXX κατ' ἐμοῦ) and it would seem as if the language of the hymn must be a recollection of the Latin.

Possibly there is another in the lines:

Still unanswer'd I pray
For a pitiful ray
From the true *inaccessible Light*,

where the reference is to 1 Timothy vi. 16. The Authorized Version is 'dwelling in *the light which no man can approach unto*', but the φῶς οἰκῶν ἀπρόσιτον of the Greek Testament is rendered in the Vulgate *lucem inhabitat inaccessibleem*.

In the verse:

That having all things done,
And all your conflicts passed,
Ye may o'ercome through Christ alone,
And stand entire at last,

there is a plain allusion to Ephesians vi. 13, 'and having done all, to stand', καὶ ἅπαντα κατεργασάμενοι στῆναι. But there seems also to be a remembrance of the Vulgate of the passage, *et in omnibus perfecti stare*, in the line 'And stand entire at last'.

In the *Notes on the New Testament*, Wesley freely revised the Authorized Version. And it has never yet been sufficiently recognized that in this (as in so much else) he was wonderfully ahead of his age. Wesley's version, issued in 1754, was a marvellous anticipation of the Revised Version of a hundred and thirty years later. I have tested three chapters, chosen haphazard, and find that in these chapters Wesley introduced sixty-one changes into the text. Out of these sixty-one changes he anticipated the reading of the Revised Version in thirty-two cases. Moreover, it is nearly always in the more serious alterations that the Revisers agree with him. There must be in the whole New Testament, say, 3,000 changes in the text of the Authorized Version in which Wesley anticipated the Revisers of 1881. And he anticipated them in the arrangement of the text into paragraphs.

Behind all this there was, of course, an intimate knowledge of the Greek Testament. John Wesley was Greek Lecturer at Lincoln College, and that did not mean that he had to do with Hellenic studies (as some who have written about it have assumed), but that he lectured on the Greek Testament. One of the early Methodist preachers recorded that Wesley could always remember the Greek of a passage in the New Testament, even when he was at a loss for the exact language of the Authorized Version. And Charles Wesley, like his brother, had a devout scholar's knowledge of the New Testament in the original.¹

¹ Dr. Adam Clarke says that John Wesley used the *O mirificam* edition of the Greek Testament, printed at Paris in 1546. This was the first of the three editions issued by Robert Stephanus (Estienne), who endeavoured to establish a better text, on critical principles, and recorded variant readings in the margin.

This intimacy with the Greek Testament appears in many delightful ways in their writings, as well as in the revised text given in the *Notes on the New Testament*. Naturally, it is most easily discerned where the Authorized Version is defective. Many scores of examples might be quoted.

There are a few absolute mistranslations in the Authorized Version. One of the worst is in Philippians ii. 7, where 'made Himself of no reputation' represents the Greek ἐκένωσε, '*emptied Himself*'. The translators of 1611 were apparently afraid of the Apostle's bold and simple word. Wesley removed the futile circumlocution of the Authorized Version and gave the only possible rendering, as the Revised Version did later. Wherever the passage is referred to in the hymns, the proper equivalent of the Greek is given:

He left His Father's throne above—
So free, so infinite His grace—
Emptied Himself of all but love,
And bled for Adam's helpless race.

To Thee, who from the eternal throne,
Cam'st *emptied* of Thy glory down,
For us to groan, to bleed, to die!

There is another passage in Philippians where the translation, inadequate to begin with, became still more unsatisfactory through the change in meaning of an English word. The Authorized Version of Philippians iii. 20 is 'For our *conversation* is in heaven'. The Greek is πολίτευμα, 'citizenship', and the Revised Version reads accordingly, 'For our *citizenship* is in heaven'. The poet evidently had the original in mind when he wrote:

To me the victor's title give
Among Thy glorious saints to live.
And all their happiness to know,
A *citizen* of heaven below.

Again, one of the striking defects of the Authorized Version

is its strange indifference as to the presence or absence of the Greek article—a characteristic largely due to the influence of the Vulgate. The Authorized Version of 2 Timothy iv. 7 is, 'I have fought *a* good fight', but the Greek is, τὸν ἀγῶνα τὸν καλόν, '*the* good fight'. So Wesley rendered it in the *Notes*, and the force of the article is remembered in more than one hymn:

'I *the* good fight have fought,
O when shall I declare?
The victory by my Saviour got
I long with Paul to share.

Bengel's comment on the text is, *bonum illum agonem*. There is only one 'good fight'—what the Apostle calls in 1 Timothy vi. 12 'the good fight of faith'.

The very next verse of Scripture furnishes another example of the same thing. The Authorized Version translates, 'Henceforth there is laid up for me *a* crown of righteousness'. But the Greek is ὁ τῆς δικαιοσύνης στέφανος, '*the* crown of righteousness'. So Wesley renders it in the *Notes*. And so constantly in the hymns:

The glorious crown of righteousness
To me reached out I view,
Conqueror through Him, I soon shall seize
And wear it as my due.

Again, the Authorized Version frequently ignores that important canon of translation which ordains that different words in the original shall be rendered by different words in the version. It is well known that there are two words in the Greek Testament, both of which the Authorized Version renders 'crown', διάδημα and στέφανος. The former is the kingly ornament, the royal crown. The word only occurs thrice in the whole of the New Testament, and all the three instances are in the Apocalypse—the 'seven diadems' of the dragon (Revelation xii. 3), the 'ten diadems' of the beast

(Revelation xiii. 1), and the 'many diadems' of Christ (Revelation xix. 12). In each case Wesley, in the *Notes*, retained the original word, as the Revisers did in 1881. One of the hymns, too, remembers the word:

And who in Christ are found,
They His *diadem* shall wear,
With life and glory crowned.

The other word, *στέφανος*, is much more frequent, and it is poorly represented by the English 'crown', since it never means the badge of royalty, as the English word generally does. The significance of the word has been beautifully defined by Archbishop Trench, in his *Synonyms of the New Testament*: 'It is the crown of victory in the games, of civic worth, of military valour, of nuptial joy; of festal gladness—woven of oak, of ivy, of parsley, of myrtle, of olive—or imitating in gold these leaves or others—of flowers, as of violets or roses, the "wreath", in fact, or the "garland", the German "Kranz" as distinguished from "Krone".' This is the word consistently used in the New Testament of the rewards of the faithful the *στέφανος* of life, of glory, of righteousness. It is this which is used in Revelation ii. 10, 'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life', τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς. The passage is quoted in many of the hymns, and the proper significance of the word is brought out in nearly every case.

Be faithful unto death,
Partake My victory,
And thou shalt wear this glorious *wreath*,
And thou shalt reign with Me.

And so in references to 2 Timothy iv. 8:

The glorious *wreath* which now I see
The Lord, the righteous Judge, on me
Shall at that day bestow.

The point is further illustrated by a passage like 1 Peter v. 4, 'Ye shall receive a crown of glory *that fadeth not away*.'

κομειῖσθε τὸν ἀμαράντινον τῆς δόξης στέφανον, literally, 'the *unfading* garland of glory'. The adjective here recalls a kindred word which is used in 1 Peter i. 4 of the heavenly heritage—'an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and *that fadeth not away* [ἀμάραντον] reserved in heaven for you'. Here the actual word is remembered in another hymn:

Those *amaranthine* bowers,
Unalienably ours,
Bloom our infinite reward:
Rise our permanent abode,
From the founded world prepared,
Purchased by the blood of God!

It may be added that the adjective ἀμάραντος (compounded of a word that means to wither and a negative prefix) gave its name to the 'amaranth', a flower which never fades.

In John xiii. 10 the Authorized Version is: 'He that is *washed* needeth not save to *wash* his feet, but is clean every whit.' This fails to distinguish between the two Greek verbs upon which the whole meaning of the passage turns, and which should be rendered as in the Revised Version: 'He that is *bathed* [ὁ λελουμένος] needeth not save to *wash* [νίψασθαι] his feet.' The point is remembered in a hymn:

If *bathed* in Thine atoning blood,
Am I not every whit made clean?
My care is now to *wash* my feet,
And if I humbly walk with Thee,
Sin I need never more repeat,
Or lose my faith and purity.

There is a remarkable example of this in regard to Hebrews iv. 9, 'There remaineth, therefore, a rest to the people of God' (A.V.). The word here translated 'rest', σαββατισμός, is one which means 'a keeping of the Sabbath', and it stands in deliberate contrast to the ordinary word 'rest', κατάπαυσις, which occurs eight times in the immediate context. The only satisfactory translation, of course, is one which marks the

difference, like that of the Revised Version: 'A promise being left of entering into His *rest* . . . For we which have believed do enter into *rest* . . . As I sware in My wrath, They shall not enter into My *rest* . . . There remaineth therefore a *sabbath-rest* for the people of God.' Now recall the lines:

Lord, I believe a *rest* remains
To all Thy people known,
A *rest* where pure enjoyment reigns,
And Thou art loved alone.

O that I now the *rest* might know,
Believe, and enter in!
Now, Saviour, now the power bestow,
And let me cease from sin.

Remove this hardness from my heart,
This unbelief remove;
To me the *rest* of faith impart,
The *sabbath* of Thy love.

In 1 Peter v. 7 two different Greek words are used where the Authorized Version would suggest the same word: 'Casting all your *care* [μέριμναν] upon Him, for He *careth* [μέλει] for you.' The first word should, of course, be rendered 'anxiety', or 'trouble'. The point is remembered in a hymn based upon the passage:

O Lover of sinners, on Thee
My burden of *trouble* I cast,
Whose *care* and compassion for me
For ever and ever shall last.

Again, the Authorized Version did not always do justice to the vivid or unusual character of a word in the text. It rendered Philippians iv. 7, 'The peace of God . . . shall *keep* your hearts'. The Revised Version 'guard' is much better, but the Apostle's word, φρουρήσει, means 'to keep with a military guard'. It is the same word that he uses in 2 Corinthians xi. 32: 'In Damascus the Governor under Aretas the King

kept-with-a-garrison [ἐφρούρει] the city of the Damascenes, desirous to apprehend me.' Wesley remembered this in dealing with Philippians iv. 7 in the *Notes*. His comment is: 'Shall guard, as a garrison does a city.' Again the point was recollected in a hymn:

My strength, the joy Thy smiles impart,
Thy peace doth *garrison* my heart.

The Authorized Version of Matthew xxviii. 19 is, 'Go ye therefore, and *teach* all nations', but the word does not here represent the usual Greek verb (which occurs in the next verse, '*teaching* [διδάσκοντες] them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you'), but μαθητεύσατε, 'make-ye-disciples-of'. This is remembered in a hymn 'At the Baptism of Adults':

We now Thy promised presence claim,
Sent to *disciple* all mankind,
Sent to baptize into Thy name,
We now Thy promised presence find.

The Authorized Version of a phrase in Colossians i. 13 is 'His dear Son', but the Greek is literally translated by the Revised Version, 'the Son of His love'.¹ John Wesley was clearly thinking of the exact language of the Apostle when he wrote:

Son of Thy Sire's Eternal Love,
Take to Thyself Thy mighty power,
Let all earth's sons Thy mercy prove,
Let all Thy bleeding grace adore!

It is well known that the word in John xiv. 18, rendered 'comfortless' in the Authorized Version, and 'desolate' in the

¹ In the sermon *On Knowing Christ after the Flesh* (cxvii) when he is deprecating the use of 'dear' in devotion—'Dear Lord', 'Dear Saviour', and the like—Wesley meets the objection that it is used by St. Paul in Colossians i. 13, 'His dear Son', by saying: 'It is not the same word. Translated literally, the sentence runs, not His dear Son, but *The Son of His love*, or His beloved Son.'

Revised Version, is ὀρφανοῦς, literally, *orphans*. This is remembered in a hymn for Whit-Sunday:

Poor helpless *orphans* we
Awhile Thine absence mourn,
But we Thy face again shall see,
But Thou wilt soon return.

The Authorized Version renders John xvi. 33, 'But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world', and the Revised Version retains the reading. But the exact and vivid sense of ἀλλὰ θαρσεῖτε, 'But take-ye-courage!' is conveyed in the line:

Courage! your Captain cries,
Who all your toil foreknew;
Toil ye shall have, yet all despise,
I have o'ercome for you.

In the lines—

The pure in heart obtain the grace
To see *without a veil* His face,

there are two references to Scripture, the first to Matthew v. 8, the second to 2 Corinthians iii. 18, where the Authorized Version translates 'With *open* face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord'. The Greek is, however, ἀνακεκαλυμμένῳ προσώπῳ, 'with *unveiled* face'. So it is rendered by the Revisers, and by Wesley in the *Notes on the New Testament*.

Obviously, the proper sense of ἀνακεκαλυμμένος was in the mind of the writer of the line 'To see *without a veil* His face'. The rendering is specially important, because the Apostle was referring to his own words throughout the previous paragraph about the *veil* (κάλυμμα) of Moses.

There is a subtle illustration of the intimate knowledge of the Greek Testament possessed by the Wesleys in the lines:

Jesus, confirm my heart's desire
To work, and speak, and think for Thee;
Still let me guard the holy fire,
And still stir up Thy gift in me.

The hymn is based upon Leviticus vi. 13: 'Fire shall be kept burning upon the altar continually: it shall not go out.' The text is prefaced to the hymn in the *Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures*. This thought of a perpetual flame pervades the verses, and it was this which suggested the quotation of Paul's words in 2 Tim. i. 6: 'Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee.' There is no apparent connection to the English reader, but there is to a student of the Greek Testament. For the word rendered 'stir up', ἀναζωπυρεῖν—it only occurs this once in the whole of the New Testament—is a word that means (as is apparent in the very structure of it) 'to stir up a fire, to rekindle'. 'Literally, blowing up the coals into a flame', as Wesley remarks in the *Notes on the New Testament*. Unquestionably, it was this remembrance of the original sense of ἀναζωπυρεῖν which suggested the particular form of the lines:

Still let me guard the holy fire,
And still *stir up* Thy gift in me.

It looks as if there is a rather subtle remembrance of the Greek Testament behind the lines:

*The dear tokens of His passion
Still His dazzling body bears;
Cause of endless exultation
To His ransomed worshippers;
With what rapture
Gaze we on those glorious scars!*

For in the phrase 'Christ crucified' (as in 1 Corinthians i. 23, ἡμεῖς δὲ κηρύσσομεν Χριστὸν ἑσταυρωμένον) it is not the aorist σταυρωθεῖς, but the perfect participle passive ἑσταυρωμένος that is used;¹ and the difference between the two verbal forms

¹ This is stressed, more than once, by Deissmann, *Paul: A Study in Social and Religious History* (1926), pp. 143, 197–8: 'He is, and remains, the crucified' (with a reference to 1 Corinthians i. 23, ii. 2, and Galatians iii. 1). 'The past is thought of as still present. Even linguistically this can be seen; the Greek perfect participle for "crucified", which might be rendered *He who is the crucified*, goes

is that the one suggests merely that the event happened, and the other that the event happened and that the effects of it endure—the difference between ‘Christ once crucified’ and ‘Christ once crucified *and still the Crucified—still bearing the marks of the Cross*’.

The Authorized Version of John vii. 17 reads, ‘If any man *will* do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God’, but the proper sense of the words ἐάν τις θέλῃ is given by the Revised Version, ‘if any man *willeth* to do His will’. The difference is important, for the verb ‘will’ in the Authorized Version might be no more than an auxiliary to ‘do’, expressing merely a future action, whereas the whole stress is upon the volition, a man’s *will* to do the will of God. This is remembered in a hymn based on the text:

Lord, that I may the doctrine know,
A *will* to do Thy will bestow.

There is an important difference between the two Greek words ἅπαξ and ἐφ’ ἅπαξ, which are both rendered ‘once’ everywhere in the Authorized Version (except in Hebrews x. 10), for ἅπαξ means ‘once’, but ἐφ’ ἅπαξ is a stronger word. It means ‘all-at-once’ in 1 Corinthians xv. 6, and everywhere else in the New Testament it means ‘once-for-all’, as in Romans vi. 10, ‘He died unto sin *once for all*’, and Hebrews vii. 27. ‘This He did *once for all*, when He offered up Himself’, and Hebrews ix. 12, ‘He entered in *once for all* into the holy place’, and Hebrews x. 10, ‘Through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ *once for all*’. This is remembered in the Eucharistic hymn:

All hail, Redeemer of mankind!
Thy life on Calvary resign’d
Did fully *once for all* atone,

a great deal further than the Aorist *He who was crucified*, which Paul in his letters does not apply to Christ. The perfect participle no doubt indicates that the Cross is not a bare fact of the past, but that its influence reached into the present’ (again with a reference to 1 Corinthians i. 23, ii. 2, and Galatians iii. 1).

and:

The purchase of His blood;
His blood which *once for all* atones,
And brings us now to God.

The Authorized Version of 2 Timothy i. 7 is 'For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love and of a sound mind'. The last words are a rendering of σωφρονισμού, which is better rendered in the Revised Version 'discipline'. Wesley translates the word 'sobriety' in the *Notes on the New Testament*, following Bengel, who has *sobrietas*. The word is used in a hymn on Acts ii. 13:

And all His saints the honour claim,
Fill'd by His Spirit from above,
With power, *sobriety*, and love.

The important word διαθήκη is always rendered 'covenant' by John Wesley in the *Notes on the New Testament*, despite the authority of Bengel, who prefers *testamentum*. Wesley was right, for, as Farrar has said, 'διαθήκη always means "covenant" —except that in Hebrews ix. 17 by a play upon words it has the meaning "will"'.¹ So constantly in the hymns:

Stablish with me *the covenant new*
And write perfection on my heart!

Then there is the obvious preference for 'new *creation*' rather than 'new creature' as a rendering of the Apostle's phrase καινή κτίσις in 2 Corinthians v. 17, and Galatians vi. 18, which is evidenced by several hymns:

My soul's new *creation*, a life from the dead,
The day of salvation, that lifts up my head.

And there is the constant use of 'bears away' for the feebleness (though legitimate) 'taketh away', in allusions to John i. 29:

¹ *History of Interpretation*, p. 30.

Lamb of God, who *bear'st* away
All the sins of all mankind!

Behold the Lamb of God, who *bears*
The sins of all the world away!

Such are some of the cases in which the Wesleys anticipated later scholarship in the exact and sensitive rendering of important phrases of Scripture.

There are also several striking instances in which, while no question of accurate translation arises, the *ipsissima verba* of the New Testament writers are recalled. Such is the allusion in one of the hymns to Titus iii. 4, 'the kindness of God our Saviour, and His *love toward man*' (R.V.), where the latter phrase is a translation of one Greek word, φιλανθρωπία, our word *philanthropy*. The original text of the passage is remembered in the lines:

When that *philanthropy* divine
Into a sinner's heart doth shine,
It shows the wondrous plan,
The wisdom in a mystery
Employed by the great One and Three,
To save His favourite, man.

In Ephesians vi. 11 and 13—'the *whole armour* of God'—the two words represent one Greek word, πανοπλία, which we have in English as *panoply*. The splendid word is remembered and used in the lines:

Stand then in His great might,
With all His strength endued;
But take, to arm you for the fight,
The *panoply* of God.

In 1 Corinthians i. 23, 'But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews *a stumbling-block*', the word in the original is σκάνδαλον, which meant a snare laid for an enemy, and then anything that trips you up. It has passed into English as

'scandal', and developed a different meaning, but the word itself is remembered in the lines:

All are not lost or wandered back;
 All have not left Thy Church and Thee;
 There are who suffer for Thy sake,
 Enjoy Thy glorious infamy,
 Esteem *the scandal* of the Cross,
 And only seek divine applause.

In Hebrews vii. 25, 'Wherefore He is able to save them *to the uttermost*', the Greek is εἰς τὸ παντελές, and the sense of 'all-perfect', 'all-complete', suggested by the form of the word, is remembered in the stanza:

Patience its perfect work shall have,
 They shall be all entire and whole,
 I will *to all perfection* save,
 And fill their body, spirit, soul.

(This is one of the very few examples where Charles Wesley appends the Greek words in a footnote.)

One of the books of the Apocrypha—the finest of them all—has considerably influenced the hymns. There are numerous allusions in the verse of the Wesleys to the language of the *Wisdom of Solomon*. One of John Wesley's translations, the fine version of Scheffler's *Du unvergleichlich's Gut*, combines two recollections of this book in two lines:

High throned on heaven's eternal hill,
In number, weight, and measure still
Thou sweetly orderest all that is;
 And yet Thou deign'st to come to me,
 And guide my steps, that I, with Thee —
 Enthroned, may reign in endless bliss.

This recalls both 'But Thou hast ordered all things in number, and measure, and weight' (Wisdom xi. 20) and 'Wisdom reacheth from one end to another, and mightily and sweetly

doth she order all things' (Wisdom viii. 1). Neither reference is in the German—

Du bist die Weisheit selbst die ewiglich regieret,
Der tiefeste Verstand, der alles glücklich führet.

One of the most affecting titles given to our Lord in the hymns is from the same source. 'But Thou sparest all, for they are Thine, O Lord, Thou Lover of Souls' (Wisdom xi. 26). This is used again and again:

Jesu, *Lover of my soul*,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high.

Lover of Souls! Thou know'st to prize
What Thou hast bought so dear;
Come then, and in Thy people's eyes,
With all Thy wounds appear!

The fine rhapsody in Wisdom iii. 1-4, 'But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God. . . . For though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality', is remembered in the verse:

The promised land, from Pisgah's top,
I now exult to see:
My hope is full (O glorious hope!)
Of immortality.

And the noble passage in Wisdom xi. 24, 'For Thou lovest all the things that are, and abhorrest nothing which Thou hast made, for never wouldest Thou have made anything if Thou hadst hated it', is behind the stanza:

O may I love like Thee!
In all Thy footsteps tread!
Thou hatest all iniquity,
But nothing Thou hast made.

The first allusion to any book other than the Bible in the hymns of Charles Wesley is a reminiscence, often repeated, of Luther's *Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*—a reference rather to the Reformer's emphasis than to his language. There is a manuscript of 1738 in the archives of the Brethren from the hand of William Holland, one of the earliest of the English Moravians, in which he writes: 'Being providentially directed to Martin Luther's *Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, I carried it round to Mr. Charles Wesley, who was then sick at Mr. Bray's, as a very precious treasure that I had found.' Charles Wesley writes in his *Journal*, under the date Wednesday, May 17, 1738: 'To-day I first saw Luther on the Galatians, which Mr. Holland had accidentally lit upon. We began, and found him nobly full of faith.' On the evening of the same day he writes: 'I spent some hours this evening in private with Martin Luther, who was greatly blessed to me, especially his conclusion of the second chapter. I laboured, waited, and prayed to feel "Who loved *me*, and gave Himself *for me*".' Luther spends some beautiful pages over these words of the Apostle, 'words full of great and mighty comfort'. He writes: 'Therefore thou shouldest so read these little words *me* and *for me*; as to meditate well upon them, and deem that they have much in them. Use thyself to lay hold of this little word *me* with a sure faith, and apply it to thyself, and do not doubt that thou art of the number named in this little word *me*.'

Three days after Charles Wesley had first read these words, on Sunday, May 21, he found the peace of God. Luther's loving insistence upon the Apostle's words is remembered and reflected in a hymn written at the time:

O Filial Deity,
 Accept my new-born cry;
 See the travail of Thy soul,
 Saviour, and be satisfied;
 Take me now, possess me whole,
 Who *for me*, *for me* hast died.

And throughout a hymn written exactly a year later, in May, 1739, and entitled 'For the Anniversary Day of one's Conversion':

Then with my heart I first believed,
Believed with faith divine;
Power with the Holy Ghost received
To call the Saviour *mine*.

I felt my Lord's atoning blood
Close to *my* soul applied;
Me, me, He loved—the Son of God—
For me, for me, He died!

He breaks the power of cancell'd sin,
He sets the prisoner free;
His blood can make the foulest clean,
His blood avail'd *for me*.

It is interesting to note that in one of his conversations with Charles Wesley, Peter Böhler—the Moravian who had so much to do with leading both the brothers into a deeper experience of religion—said, 'Had I a thousand tongues I would praise God with them all!' Evidently he had in mind the first lines of a German hymn by Johann Mentzer, in the *Herrnhut Gesangbuch*:

O dass ich tausend Zungen hätte
Und einen tausendfachen Mund:
So stimmt' ich damit in die Wette
Vom allertiefsten Herzensgrund
Ein' Loblied nach dem andern an,
Von dem, was Gott an mir gethan!

Böhler's words were remembered when Charles Wesley wrote the hymn that has been mentioned above, one verse of which is:

O for *a thousand tongues* to sing
My great Redeemer's praise,
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of His grace!

John Wesley's *Notes on the New Testament* were largely indebted to the *Gnomon* of Bengel—'that great light of the Christian world (lately gone to his reward) Bengelius', as he is called in the Preface. It is a striking proof of Wesley's scholarship and shrewdness that he should have selected as the basis of his exposition a work which, in the language of Dr. Sanday, 'stands out among the exegetical literature not only of the eighteenth century, but of all centuries, for its masterly terseness and precision, and for its combination of spiritual insight with the best scholarship of the time'. In his notes on the Apocalypse, Wesley used in addition to the *Gnomon* Bengel's German exposition of the book, the *Erklärte Offenbarung Johannis, und vielmehr Jesu Christi*, as it is quaintly entitled.

On Revelation ii. 17 Bengel has this beautiful note: '*A new name*. So Jacob after his victory received the new name of Israel. The word new is very characteristic of the Revelation [*ein recht apocalyptisches Wort*]: a new name, a new song, a new heaven, a new earth, new Jerusalem, all things new. *Which no one knoweth but he that receiveth it*. Jesus Himself had a new name, known only to Himself. 'Would'st thou know what the new name shall be? Overcome! Before that thou askest in vain: thereafter thou wilt soon read it, written on the white stone.' Charles Wesley assisted in compiling the *Notes*, and this comment, the last two sentences of which were translated by the elder brother, evidently impressed him; for eight years later, in the *Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures*, he published a hymn which paraphrases Bengel's note:

Dost thou desire to know and see
 What thy mysterious name shall be?
 Contending for thy heavenly home,
 Thy latest foe in death o'ercome;
 Till then thou searchest out in vain
 What only conquest can explain.

But when the Lord hath closed thine eyes,
And opened them in Paradise,
Receiving thy new name unknown,
Thou read'st it wrote on the white stone,
Wrote on thy pure humanity,
God, Three in One, and One in Three.

There is at least one other hymn which is indebted to a famous commentary. The passage of Scripture concerned is Exodus xxiv. 6, 'The Lord, the Lord, a God full of compassion and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy and truth'. Matthew Henry's note on this is: 'The spring of mercy is always full, and streams of mercy are always flowing. There is mercy enough in God, enough for all, enough for each, enough for evermore.' This is simply versified in the stanza:

Its streams the whole creation reach,
So plenteous is the store,
Enough for all, enough for each,
Enough for evermore.

THE HYMNS AND THE FATHERS, THE LITURGIES, AND THE MYSTICS

THERE are many allusions in the hymns to the writings of the Fathers of the Church. Samuel Wesley the elder, in a letter to a young clergyman, containing detailed advice as to his studies—a letter which John Wesley published, with a preface, many years later—declared that ‘the blessed Ignatius’s Epistles can never be enough read, or praised, or valued, next to the inspired writings’. And John Wesley devoted thirty pages of the first volume of the *Christian Library* to the Epistles of Ignatius. It is not surprising, therefore, that there should be several echoes of a passage in his Epistle to the Romans (vii. 2): ‘Living I write unto you, but it is as loving to die. *For my Love has been crucified* [ὁ ἐμὸς ἔρως ἐσταύρωται] and there is left in me no fire of earthly love at all.’ The famous phrase becomes the refrain of the hymn, ‘O Love Divine, what hast thou done?’:

The immortal God for me hath died:
My Lord, *my Love is crucified*—

and it is recalled in several other hymns. It had been previously used in an old German hymn which John Wesley is not likely to have seen, and it is quoted in one of the *Spiritual Songs* of John Mason, which was certainly known to both brothers:

My Lord, my Love is crucified,
He all the Pains did bear;
But in the Sweetness of His Rest,
He makes His Servants share.

Another hymn contains an echo of Tertullian:

Though earth and hell the word gainsay,
The Word of God can never fail;
The Lamb shall take my sins away,
'Tis certain, though impossible;
The thing impossible shall be,
All things are possible to me.

The passage is in Tertullian's treatise *De Carne Christi*. He is arguing against Marcion, whose contention was that the humiliation implied in the fact of the Incarnation was unworthy of God. Tertullian answers this in a passage splendidly paradoxical and profoundly spiritual: 'Spare the whole world's one only hope, thou who art destroying the indispensable dishonour of our faith. Whatever is unworthy of God is of gain to me. . . . The Son of God is born; we are not ashamed, because we ought to be ashamed. And the Son of God died; it is perfectly credible, because it is absurd. And being buried He rose again; it is certain, because it is impossible.' ('Natus est Dei Filius; non pudet quia pudendum est; et mortuus est Dei Filius; prorsus credible est quia ineptum est; et sepultus resurrexit; certum est quia impossibile.') The hymn, however, merely quotes the famous phrase that is known to all the world.

A passage in Tertullian's *Apology* (c. 39), 'Look ye, say they, how these Christians seem to love one another!' is also recalled in a hymn which is probably by John Wesley:

In them let all mankind behold
How Christians lived in days of old;
Mighty their envious foes to move,
A proverb of reproach—and love.

Here it is hardly probable that this is a direct reference to the passage, for John Wesley wrote to his mother from Marienborn while on his journey to Herrnhut, quoting the words and attributing them to Julian the Apostate: 'Eighty-eight of them [the Moravians] praise God with one heart and one mouth at

Marienborn; another little company at Runnesburg, an hour off; another at Budingon, an hour from thence; and yet another at Frankfort. I now understand those words of poor Julian, "See how these Christians love one another!" The phrase is quoted as proverbial in the introduction to Arndt's *True Christianity*, and in at least one other of the works included in the *Christian Library*.

Another passage in the *Apology* is referred to in more than one hymn: 'If Tiber overflows, and Nile does not; if heaven stands still and withholds its rain, and the earth quakes; if famine or pestilence take their marches through the country, the word is, Away with these Christians to the lions!' (c. 40).

'Away with them', the world exclaim,

'The Christians to the lions cast!'

The stream is troubled by the lamb,

And must be so, while time shall last.

The Lamb, they say, disturbs the stream,

The world confounded is by them

Who's confusions end:

Yet still, 'Away with them', they cry,

'The Christians burn or crucify,

Or to the lions send!'

It is curious that both these hymns which have the allusion to Tertullian's words should also contain a reference to one of Aesop's fables, the story of the wolf who complained that the stream of which he was drinking was disturbed by a lamb farther down—a mere pretext for devouring the alleged disturber.

It has been suggested that the lines—

To damp our earthly joys,

To increase our gracious fears,

For ever let the Archangel's voice

Be sounding in our ears:

The solemn midnight cry,

Ye dead, the Judge is come,

Arise, and meet Him in the sky,

And meet your instant doom!

recall a passage of Jerome: 'Quoties diem illum considero, toto corpore contremisco, sive enim comedo, sive bibo, sive aliquid aliud facio, semper videtur illa tuba terribilis sonare in auribus meis, Surgite, mortui, venite ad iudicium' (*In xvii Johannis*). Charles Wesley may very probably have met with the words, apart from any patristic reading, for they are quoted in the Latin in Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, and in English by Chaucer in the *Persones Tale*: 'For as Seint Jerome sayth: at every time that me remembreth of the day of dome, I quake: for whan I ete or drinke, or do what so I do, ever semeth me that the trompe sowneth in min eres: riseth ye up that ben ded, and cometh to the jugement.'

In John Austin's *Offices* (1668) (partly republished in the *Christian Library*) there is a hymn of which one verse runs:

O quicken, Lord, our Faith,
Of these great Joys and Fears;
And make the last Day's Trumpet be
Still sounding in our Ears.

But Charles Wesley's stanza is more than an echo of this: it carries the allusion to Jerome's language farther than Austin's lines do, to *Surgite, mortui, venite ad iudicium*.

The lines in one of the hymns on heaven—

A brother dead to God,
By sin alas! undone,

recall the famous story of St. John and the robber, told by Eusebius in the *Ecclesiastical History* (iii, 23)—a book which John Wesley records reading for the second time in November, 1741. Inquiring of a bishop in the neighbourhood of Ephesus as to the welfare of a young man whom he had previously committed to the bishop's special charge, the Apostle received the answer, 'He is dead.' Being further questioned, the bishop said, 'He is dead to God, for alas! he is become a villain, and is fled to the mountains to be a robber.' Whereupon the Apostle hastened to the mountain fastnesses, and never rested

until he had brought back the young man in penitence, and restored him to the Church. (It may be added that the story is told in Wesley's abridgement of Cave's *Primitive Christianity* in the *Christian Library*.)

When we reach Augustine we are on surer ground. The Wesleys evidently knew the *Confessions* well. It was one of the highly interesting list of books which had to be provided (by the direction of an early Conference) for the use of Wesley and the preachers at the three centres of London, Bristol, and Newcastle. Wesley once prepared for the press an edition of it in the original Latin, probably intended for the scholars of Kingswood School.

In 1745 Wesley maintained a long correspondence with 'Mr. John Smith'—supposed to be the *nom de guerre* of Dr. Secker, Bishop of Oxford. In one of his letters Wesley quoted, as an instance of what he meant by his doctrine of assurance, a whole chapter of the *Confessions*, 'which', he writes, 'I was reading yesterday'. It is the great passage which ends with the words, 'And Thou criest to me from afar, Yea, verily, *I am that I am*. And I heard, as the heart heareth, nor had I room to doubt, and I should sooner doubt that I live, than that Truth is not' (vii, 10).

This great spiritual classic has left considerable traces in the hymns of both brothers. A passage in the first book recalls some of Charles Wesley's most impassioned lines. Augustine wrote: 'Hide not Thy face from me. Let me die (that I die not) that I may see Thy face!' ('Moriar ne moriar, ut eam videam') (i, 5). There is a very similar passage in the *Soliloquies*: 'But why does thou hide Thy face? Haply Thou wilt say, "No man can see Me and live." Ah, Lord, let me die, that I may see Thee; let me see Thee, that I may die.' ('Sed cur faciem tuam abscondis? Forte dicis "non videbit me homo et vivet" [Exodus xxxiii. 20]. Eia, Domine, moriar ut te videam. Videam, ut hic moriar') (*Solil.*, c. i). This became a favourite thought with the poet of Methodism, and inspired many stanzas such as:

I cannot see Thy face and live!
 Then let me see Thy face, and die!
 Now, Lord, my gasping spirit receive!
 Give me on eagles' wings to fly;
 With eagles' eyes on Thee to gaze,
 And plunge into the glorious blaze.

And if there were any doubt about the connection between such lines as these and the words of the great African Father, it would be dispelled by the fact that another hymn which echoes the thought—

Live only Christ in me, not I;
 O let me see Thy face, and die!

was headed, when published in the *Hymns and Sacred Poems* of 1742, '*Moriar ut te videam!*' 'Let me die that I may see Thee!' Here the phrase is evidently quoted from the *Soliloquies*.

Another reminiscence of the *Confessions* occurs in John Wesley's translation of Tersteegen's great hymn, 'Thou hidden love of God, whose height'. The lines—

My heart is pained, *nor can it be*
At rest, till it finds rest in Thee—

deliberately recall the famous passage: 'Thou dost arouse us to delight in praising Thee; for Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our heart is restless, until it find rest in Thee!' (i, 1). Here the allusion is John Wesley's own; there is nothing of it in Tersteegen's German, the last lines of which are:

Ich bin nicht stille, wie ich soll
 Ich fühl es ist dem Geist nicht wohl,
 Weil er in dir nicht stehet.

There is a further reminiscence of Augustine in another of John Wesley's translations from the German. The lines—

Ah! why did I so late Thee know,
Thee, lovelier than the sons of men!

recall the classic passage: 'Too late I loved Thee, Beauty so old and yet so new, too late I loved Thee!' (x, 27). Here it is Scheffler himself who is responsible for the allusion to Augustine, for it is clearer in the German than in the English: 'Ach, dass ich dich so spät erkennet, Du hochgelobte Schönheit du!'

A phrase in one verse of John Wesley's translation of Scheffler's *Du unvergleichlichs Gut* has been coloured by the translator's remembrance of the same passage in Augustine. Angelus wrote: 'Du bist die Schönheit selbst, Du kannst nichts Schöneres finden! Es kann dich nichts als nur dein eigne Schönheit binden.' But *die Schönheit selbst* becomes in Wesley's translation, with a memory of Augustine's *pulchritudo antiqua*:

Primeval Beauty! in Thy sight,
The first-born, fairest sons of light
See all their brightest glories fade!

In the hymn 'For an Unconverted Child' the lines occur:

Regard my endless griefs and fears
Nor let the son of all these tears
Be finally undone.

This is an unmistakable allusion to the story told by Augustine in the *Confessions* (iii, 12) about his mother and the Bishop. Monica besought the Bishop to see her son, and strive to bring him from the error of his ways. The Bishop replied that it was best to leave him alone, and pray for him. 'When she would not be satisfied, but urged him more, with entreaties and many tears, that he would see me, and discourse with me; he, a little displeased at her importunity, saith, "Go thy ways, and God be with thee: it is not possible that the son of these tears should perish." Which answer she took (as she often mentioned in her conversations with me) as if it had been a voice from heaven.'

And there is at least one other of Augustine's wonderful phrases in the *Confessions* that influenced the verse of Charles

Wesley. It is a part of a great supplication: 'Narrow is the home of my soul; enlarge it, that Thou mayest enter in. It is ruinous; do Thou repair it' (i, 5). This is reflected in the lines:

Thou know'st the way to bring me back,
 My fallen spirit to restore;
 O for Thy truth and mercy's sake,
 Forgive, and bid me sin no more;
The ruins of my soul repair,
 And make my heart a house of prayer.

There are other passages in the *Soliloquies* which seem to have influenced the hymns. 'Aegrotus sum, ad medicum clamo; caecus sum, ad lucem propero: mortuus sum, ad vitam suspiro. Tu es medicus, tu lux, tu vita. Jesu Nazarene, miserere mei' (c. ii). It is difficult to read this without thinking that some remembrance of it was in Charles Wesley's mind when he wrote:

Jesus, my all in all Thou art;
 My rest in toil, my ease in pain,
 The medicine of my broken heart,
 In war my peace, in loss my gain,
 My smile beneath the tyrant's frown,
 In shame my glory and my crown:
 In want, my plentiful supply,
 In weakness my almighty power,
 In bonds my perfect liberty,
 My light in Satan's darkest hour,
 In grief my joy unspeakable,
 My life in death, my heaven in hell.

And here is another characteristic passage: 'Quoniam si quid boni est parvum vel magnum, donum tuum est, et nostrum non est nisi malum' (c. xv). The thought seems to be reproduced in the lines:

All power is Thine in earth and heaven,
 All fullness dwells in Thee alone;
Whate'er I have was freely given,
Nothing but sin I call my own.

And, once more, Augustine's words: 'Et video nunc quia donum tuum est' (c. xv) seem to be reflected in John Wesley's translation of Scheffler's *Ich will dich lieben, meine Stärke* (there is an unquestioned allusion to Augustine, in the preceding verse, which I have already mentioned):

And now if more at length I see,
'Tis through Thy light, and comes from Thee.

Augustine's fine comment upon our Lord's first miracle (*In Joan. Ev. Tract.*, viii, 1) is quoted in another hymn. 'For He who made wine on that day at the marriage feast, in those six water-pots, which He commanded to be filled with water, the self-same does this every year in vines. . . . But we do not wonder at the latter, because it happens every year: it has lost its marvellousness by its constant recurrence.'

Charles Wesley wrote, in a hymn upon John ii. 7:

When wine they want, the Almighty Lord
Water instead of wine demands:
He both created by His word,
Nothing His sovereign will withstands:
And every year in every vine
He changes water into wine.

The saying that the virtues of the heathen are splendid sins is frequently attributed to Augustine. I cannot find it in his works, though there is a passage in *The City of God* (xix, 25) which is very near the sense: 'The virtues which the mind seems to itself to possess, and by which it restrains the body and the vices that it may obtain and keep what it desires, are rather vices than virtues so long as there is no reference to God in the matter. For although some suppose that virtues which have a reference only to themselves, and are desired only on their own account, are yet true and genuine virtues, the fact is that even then they are inflated with pride, and are therefore to be reckoned vices rather than virtues.' Here, however, there is no adjective to correspond with the *splendida*

vitia or the *splendidum peccatum* in the phrase as generally quoted. It is this which must have been in Charles Wesley's mind when he used the phrase, more than once, and in opposite applications, as in:

But till the love of Christ we gain,
We promise, vow, and strive in vain,
And never can succeed;
Our righteousness as rags unclean,
Our virtue is but splendid sin,
And our best works are dead:

and in another hymn, referring to Cornelius:

Were his alms and ceaseless prayers
Splendid sins in God's esteem?
No: the Lord Himself declares
Both acceptable to Him:
Grateful both as incense rise,
Bring an angel from the skies!

In one of the hymns there is a singular idea as to the intercourse of heaven:

Where glorified spirits by sight
Converse in their holy abode.

This, it has been suggested, may be derived from a passage in *Hudibras* (the *Heroical Epistle*)—a strange source!:

For what can earth produce, but love,
To represent the joys above?
Or who but lovers can converse,
Like angels, by the eye-discourse?

But the notion really comes from Plotinus, and it is quite likely that Charles Wesley may have met with it there. The passage is in the fifth *Ennead* (viii, 4): 'They speak not one with the other; but, *as we understand many things by the eyes only, so does soul read soul in heaven*, where the spiritual body is pure, and nothing is hidden, and nothing feigned.'

There are two rather recondite allusions in a stanza of one of the hymns on the Passion:

Dies the glorious Cause of all,
The true eternal *Pan*,
Falls to raise us from our fall,
To ransom sinful man:
Well may *Sol* withdraw his light,
With the Sufferer sympathize,
Leave the world in sudden night,
While his Creator dies!

The first reference is to the story recorded by Plutarch (*De Oraculorum Defectu*) that in the reign of Tiberius a pilot named Thamus was steering his ship round the coast of Epirus, when he heard voices proclaiming, 'Thamus, Thamus, great Pan is dead!'¹ (*Πάν ὁ μέγας τέθνηκεν.*) The other allusion is fainter. There is a legend that Dionysius the Areopagite, perceiving a disturbance in nature at the time of the Crucifixion, said, 'Ἡ τὸ Θεῖον πάσχει, ἢ τῷ πάσχοντι συμπάσχει,'² 'Either the Divinity suffers, or sympathizes with the sufferer!' It would seem that a recollection of this has coloured the line, 'Well may Sol withdraw his light, *With the Sufferer sympathize.*'

The striking phrase in one of Charles Wesley's most pregnant stanzas—

Soul of my soul remain!
Who didst for all fulfil,
In me, O Lord, fulfil again
Thy heavenly Father's will!

occurs in the *Meditations* of St. Theresa, 'God is the 'soul of my soul', and it is used of faith by St. Augustine: 'Unde mors in anima? Quia non est fides. Unde mors in corpore? Quia non est ibi anima. Ergo animae tuae anima fides est' (*In Joan. Ev. Tract.*, xlix, 15). Macarius (an author beloved by all the

¹ Cf. Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar* (May), and *Gloss*.

² Cf. *Brev. Rom.*, October 9 (Lectio 4), and Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.*, 'I, iii, 4.'

Wesleys) has a passage in the *Institutes*, and another in a *Homily* included in John Wesley's *Christian Library*, which supply rather a close parallel to the whole verse: 'But those souls into which the grace of the Divine Spirit comes, and in the depth of whose minds it has made its habitation—to such the Lord Himself becomes a soul.' 'Then all these exercises of virtue become to him as nature. For the Lord, when He comes and is in him, and he in the Lord, performs in him His own commands without labour, filling him with the fruits of the Spirit.'

A passage in Lactantius which contains a similar thought has a phrase which appears to be reflected in several hymns. It occurs in the *Divine Institutes* (iv, 25): 'For since there was no righteousness on earth, He sent a Teacher, as it were a living law, to found a new name and temple, that by His word and example He might spread throughout the earth a true and holy worship.' The phrase is reproduced in many lines, such as:

O might our every work and word
Express the tempers of our Lord,
The nature of our Head above:
His spirit send into our hearts,
Engraving on our inward parts
The living law of holiest love!

O put it in our inward parts,
The living law of perfect love!
Write the new precept on our hearts;
We shall not then from Thee remove,

The living law of love reveal,
And write it in our inward parts,
Thou God of love unsearchable,
Set up Thy kingdom in our hearts!

Behind all these passages there is, of course, the thought of Jeremiah xxxi. 33, and the reference to it in Hebrews x. 16.

It is a striking fact that Methodism has supplied English

Christendom with hymns for all the great festivals of the ecclesiastical year. At Christmas 'Hark! the herald angels sing!' is heard in every land where the English language is spoken.¹ It is the same at Easter with 'Christ the Lord is risen to-day!' and much the same on Ascension Day with 'Hail the day that sees Him rise', and on Whit-Sunday with 'Granted is the Saviour's prayer'.

It has been suggested that 'Hark! the herald angels sing!' was possibly inspired by a hymn from the Menaion of the Greek Church, Χριστὸς γεννᾶται · δοξάσατε. This forms a part of the Canon for Christmas Day. It was written by St. Cosmas, the foster-brother of St. John Damascene, who lived in the first half of the eighth century. Unhappily, there is not a great deal that can be urged in support of this attractive suggestion. There is little likeness between the Greek and the English, not more than we might expect to find between any two hymns for the Nativity, and hardly as much as exists, for example, between Wesley's English and the Latin of Peter the Venerable in the hymn *Coelum gaude, terra plaude*.

It has also been suggested that Charles Wesley may have had in mind, when writing 'Hail the day that sees Him rise', the hymn of Fortunatus (or a fourteenth-century imitator of his), *Salve festa dies toto venerabilis aevo, Qua Deus ad coelos scandit et astra tenet*. Here, again, there is very little resemblance—none whatever, in fact, except the initial phrase.

But these suggestions, baseless as they seem to be, are enough to raise in one's mind the whole question of a possible indebtedness, on the part of the Wesleys, to the great hymns of the Middle Ages. At first sight, such a relation does not seem

¹ Charles Wesley wrote, 'Hark! how all the welkin rings, Glory to the King of kings!' and the perverted version at present in use was introduced by some mediocrity who boggled at the word 'welkin'. Wesley's own words should be restored, for they are true to Scripture, and the substituted words are not. The angels' song was 'Glory to God in the highest!'—the praise was addressed to the Most High, and not to the Holy Babe.

at all likely. In the eighteenth century the whole of the medieval hymnody was almost a *terra incognita*. It was only with the rise of romanticism in literature, at the end of that century, that these hymns began to come to their own. One may say that Scott's use of Thomas of Celano's great dirge (in which he followed Goethe) was almost the beginning of modern interest in medieval hymns. And it was nearly half a century later when these hymns began to be recovered for the use of the English Churches by Dr. Neale, and other High Anglican and Catholic scholars. In the age of the Wesleys there was very little knowledge in England of the Latin hymns of the Middle Ages, and still less of the Greek hymns, found in the service-books of the Eastern Church. On the face of it, therefore, these hymns are not likely to have been known to the brothers.

On the other hand, there are some small but significant facts. John Wesley translated a German hymn which itself was a translation from the Latin. 'Jesu, Thy soul renew my own' is a version of Scheffler's *Die Seele Christi heil'ge mich*, which again was a version of the medieval *Anima Christi sanctifica me*. These lines are entitled in the Roman Breviary 'The Aspirations of St. Ignatius to the Most Holy Redeemer', but the ascription to the founder of the Society of Jesus is an error. The lines probably date from the fourteenth century. It is surely possible that John Wesley was aware of the Latin original.

Again, when Charles Wesley was in Dublin in 1747 he wrote in his *Journal*: 'I spoke with great freedom to the poor Papists, urging them to repentance and the love of Christ, from the authority of their own Kempis, and *their own Liturgy*.' This can only mean that he was a student of the Breviary—a very suggestive fact. Doubtless it was there that he read the splendid story of the ecstasy of St. Thomas Aquinas, which impressed him so much, and left its mark upon more than one hymn. The incident is told in one of the lessons for the saint's festival.¹ As St. Thomas prayed, he heard the Saviour's voice

¹ *Brev. Rom.*, March 7 (Lectio 5).

saying, 'Thou hast written well of Me; what reward wouldst thou have?' and he exclaimed in answer, 'Thyself, Lord, nothing but Thyself!' This is recalled unmistakably in such lines as—

Give me Thyself! from every boast,
From every wish set free,
Let all I have in Thee be lost,
But give Thyself to me!

and—

Nothing beside my God I want,
Nothing in earth or heaven!

And if Charles Wesley knew the Breviary, he must have known the Latin hymns in it. Accordingly, we are not surprised to find that the language of the great hymn of St. Thomas Aquinas, *Adoro te devote*, has apparently coloured several of our hymns.

A phrase in the first line, *latens Deitas*, appears in a hymn for the Nativity:

He laid His glory by,
He wrapped Him in our clay,
Unmarked by human eye,
The *latent* Godhead lay.

Then, later in the hymn, the Angelic Doctor wrote:

Me immundum munda tuo sanguine,
Cujus una stilla saluum facere
Totum mundum quit ab omni scelete,

lines which have been translated very literally thus:

Unclean I am, but cleanse me in Thy blood!
Of which a *single drop*, for sinners spilt,
Can purge the entire world of all its guilt.

This mystical notion of the efficacy of a single drop of the Redeemer's blood became a favourite thought with Charles Wesley:

By all Thou hast done for my sake,
One drop of Thy blood I implore,
 Now, now let it touch me, and make
 The sinner a sinner no more!

And again:

Sprinkle it, Jesus, on my heart!
One drop of Thine all-cleansing blood
 Shall make my sinfulness depart,
 And fill me with the life of God!

At least a dozen other examples might be given of the presence of this thought in our hymns. It should be said, in fairness, that the thought occurs in some of the older English poets,¹ notably Donne, who has it more than once:

Now Thou art lifted up, drawn me to Thee,
 And at Thy death, giving such liberal dole,
 Moist *with one drop of Thy blood* my dry soul.

But Donne undoubtedly got it from St. Thomas Aquinas, and so may Charles Wesley, as we have seen. And since he knew the Latin hymns in the Breviary, he may very well have known other medieval hymns not found there.

John Wesley certainly did know the old Nativity hymns, *Puer natus in Bethlehem*, and *In dulci jubilo*, for they are found, with some modern Latin hymns written by Johann Wilhelm Petersen (1649-1727), in Freylinghausen's *Gesangbuch*. And the brothers may have encountered in their reading other Latin hymns of the Middle Ages. At any rate here is another extraordinary parallel. In a hymn by Adam of St. Victor there is the striking phrase, applied to the Holy Spirit: 'Tu qui dator es et donum,' 'Thou who Giver art and Gift'; and in another

¹ The most famous instance of it in our literature is, of course, the poignant passage in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*:

See, where Christ's blood streams in the firmament!
 One drop of blood will save me: O my Christ!

It is not likely, however, that Charles Wesley ever read the play.

hymn by the same writer there is a variation of the same phrase, *Tu donum, tu donator*, 'Thou the Gift, Thou the Giver'. (A very similar thought is found in the *Enchiridion* of St. Augustine: 'Et utique Spiritus Sanctus Dei donum est, quod quidem et ipsum est aequale donanti' (c. xxxvii): 'And the Holy Spirit is the Gift of God, the Gift being Himself indeed equal to the Giver.')

This recurs constantly in Charles Wesley's hymns for Whit-Sunday:

Life Divine in us renew,
Thou the Gift and Giver too.

For Thee our hearts we lift,
And wait the heavenly *Gift*;
Giver, Lord of life Divine,
To our dying souls appear.
Grant the grace for which we pine,
Give Thyself, the Comforter.

I come athirst and faint
Thy Spirit to receive,
Give me the Gift for which I pant,
Thyself the Giver give.

There are in the hymns many reminiscences of the English Liturgy, as we should expect.

Meet and right it is to sing,
In every time and place,
Glory to our heavenly King,
The God of truth and grace,

is a paraphrase of the Preface and the *Sanctus* of the Communion Office: 'It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty . . . Therefore with angels and archangels . . .'

Similarly—

Glory be to God on high,
God, whose glory fills the sky,

is a paraphrase of the *Gloria in Excelsis* of the Communion Office: 'Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good

will toward men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee. . . .’

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Thy Godhead we adore,

is a poetical version of the *Gloria Patri*.

Here it may be interposed that one of the early publications of the Wesleys was a pamphlet, which appeared in 1745, entitled *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*. This had a long Preface ‘extracted from Dr. Brevint’. Brevint was a native of Jersey, educated at Saumur and Oxford, once chaplain to Marshal Turenne, and finally Dean of Lincoln, where he died in 1695. His book, said to have been written at the request of Madame Turenne and the Duchesse de Bouillon, was entitled *The Christian Sacrament and Sacrifice*. One paragraph in the Preface reads thus: ‘This Victim having been offered up in the fullness of times, and in the midst of the world, which is Christ’s great temple, and having been thence carried up to heaven, which is His sanctuary, from thence spreads salvation all around, as the burnt-offering did its smoke. And thus His body and blood have everywhere, but especially at this Sacrament, a true and real presence. . . . So that we need not say, *Who will go up to heaven?* since, without either ascending or descending, this sacred body of Jesus fills with atonement and blessing the remotest part of this temple.’ It will be seen that this is simply versified in one of the Eucharistic hymns:

Victim divine, Thy grace we claim
While thus Thy precious death we show:
Once offered up, a spotless Lamb,
In Thy great temple here below,
Thou didst for all mankind atone,
And standest now before the throne.

Thou standest in the holy place,
As now for guilty sinners slain:
The blood of sprinkling speaks, and prays,
All prevalent for helpless man:
Thy blood is still our ransom found,
And speaks salvation all around.

We need not now go up to heaven,
 To bring the long-sought Saviour down;
 Thou art to all already given,
 Thou dost even now Thy banquet crown:
 To every faithful soul appear,
 And show Thy real presence here.

The language of the Litany is paraphrased in the stanza—

Thou loving, all-atoning Lamb,
 Thee, by Thy painful agony,
 Thy bloody sweat, Thy grief and shame,
 Thy Cross and passion on the tree,
 Thy precious Death and Life, I pray
 Take all, take all my sins away!

And there are numerous other examples of an influence which, in the case of devout Churchmen like the Wesleys, was inevitable.

There is a strain of essential mysticism in the hymns of the Wesleys. The recognition of this fact would correct a frequent mis-judgement. Leslie Stephen wrote: 'Mysticism seemed to John Wesley to be simply folly. His feet were on the solid earth, and he preferred the plain light of day to the glooms and glories loved by more imaginative natures.'¹

Even so learned and so candid a writer as Dr. Gwatkin thinks that Wesley's teaching was 'as clear and full of common sense as Matthew Tindal's Deism, and as characteristically wanting in a sense of mystery'.² Now it is perfectly true that Wesley was a man of his century, that he had a precise and logical intellect, and that he hated vagueness. It is also true that he said hard things, again and again, about 'the mystic divines', driven thereto by the disastrous effects of an errant Quietism among the Societies. But it should be remembered that there is much on the other side.

¹ *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. ii, xii, p. 87.

² *The Knowledge of God*, vol. ii, p. 245.

Some of the finest of John Wesley's translations from the German are versions of the profoundly mystical hymns of of Tersteegen and Scheffler. And then there is the unmistakable accent of mysticism in much of Charles Wesley's verse. A distinguished French writer on Methodism, Dr. Augustin Leger, has remarked upon this: 'Qui veut aimer Dieu, doit aimer toutes choses en Dieu seul: Un en tous, et tous en Un, formule que répéteront à satiété les vers des Wesley.'¹ Surely they were mystics who wrote:

O sovereign Love, to Thee I cry!
Give me Thyself, or else I die!
Save me from death; from hell set free;
Death, hell, are but the want of Thee,

and:

Eager for Thee I ask and pant,
So strong the principle divine,
Carries me out with sweet constraint,
'Till all my hallowed soul is Thine;
Plunged in the Godhead's deepest sea
And lost in Thy immensity!

and:

Nothing else in earth or skies,
In time, or in eternity:
Heaven itself could not suffice
I seek not Thine, but Thee.

Then John Wesley was early and deeply imbued with mystical teaching. He read the *Theologia Germanica* and some of the writings of Tauler in early life, and at Oxford was a professed disciple of William Law. He greatly admired the writings of the Cambridge Platonists (a distinction in itself for one who lived in the eighteenth century) and printed some of John Smith's Sermons in the *Christian Library*. In the same collection he issued an abridgement of the *Guida Spirituale* of Molinos, the Spanish mystic. There does not appear to have been any other edition in English between 1699 and 1775.

He was specially interested in two mystics of the preceding

¹ *La Jeunesse de Wesley*, p. 191.

century, and refers to their life and doctrine again and again—Antoinette Bourignon and Jeanne de la Mothe Guyon.

He read Antoinette Bourignon's *Treatise of Solid Virtue and Light of the World* in April, 1736, while in Georgia. He included the former work in the *Christian Library* in 1754, and many years before he had published translations of some of the author's devotional verse. Scattered through her voluminous works are five hymns, two of which were translated and included in the *Hymns and Sacred Poems* of 1739, *Venez, Jesus, mon salutaire*, 'Come, Saviour Jesus, from above', and *Adieu, Monde, vray pipeur*, 'World, adieu, thou real cheat!' The identity of the translator is a pretty problem in criticism. The hymns are claimed for Dr. Byrom, on the strength of two facts. First, they are included in his *Miscellaneous Poems* (1773). But, as these were collected and published ten years after his death, this is not absolutely conclusive evidence. Byrom might have copied out the verses because they interested him by their mysticism, and after his death they might thus have been very easily mistaken for his own. (Yet Wesley read the *Miscellaneous Poems* when they appeared in 1773, and made no remark on the presence of these hymns.) In the second place, there is a letter of Byrom's to Charles Wesley dated March 3, 1738: 'As your brother has brought so many hymns translated from the French, you will have a sufficient number, and no occasion to increase them by the small addition of Mademoiselle Bourignon's two little pieces. I desire you to favour my present weakness, if I judge wrong, and not to publish them.' This seems to me to suggest unmistakably Byrom's authorship of the translations. There remains the difficulty that no other translations from the French are known to have been in John Wesley's possession. Is it possible that this was a slip of Byrom's for 'many hymns translated from the *German*', of which he had previously heard? The sense would then be, 'since he has so many translated hymns, he will need no more'. Byrom did not himself begin to learn German until several years after this, which would make the mistake as to the

language more conceivable. But, on the other side of the question, there is the fact that Byrom wrote to his son on April 26, 1739, referring to the *Hymns and Sacred Poems* published in that year by the Wesleys in these terms: "They have together printed a book of hymns, amongst which they have inserted two of M. Bourignon's, one of which they call "A Farewell to the World", and the other "Renouncing all for Christ" (Come, Saviour Jesus), I think, from the French.'

The style of the two hymns is unquestionably more like that of John Wesley than like that of Byrom. If the versions were by Byrom, they were certainly somewhat altered by Wesley.

An incident related in Antoinette Bourignon's autobiography has influenced the language of one hymn. When the Flemish Quietist was a child, struck by the unlikeness of the life around her to what she read of in the Gospels, she said to her parents, 'Where are the Christians? Let us go to the country *where the Christians live!*' This is remembered in a hymn on 'Primitive Christianity':

Ye different sects, who all declare,
'Lo! here is Christ!' or 'Christ is there!'
Your stronger proofs divinely give,
And show me *where the Christians live!*

When John Wesley was on his way to Herrnhut in July, 1738, he recorded in his *Journal*: 'In the afternoon we came to Weymar, where we had more difficulty to get through the city than is usual, even in Germany; being not only detained a considerable time at the gate, but also carried before I know not what great man (I believe the Duke) in the Square; who after many other questions, asked what we were going so far as Herrnhut for: I answered, "To see the place where the Christians live." He looked hard, and let us go.'

Moore, in his *Life of Wesley* (i, 329), says that the 'great man' was 'Frederick, afterwards King of Prussia, then Prince Royal, as Mr. Wesley was informed'. It would be attractive to think of an encounter between two men so famous, and so different, as Frederick the Great and John Wesley; but un-

fortunately there is little to warrant us in such a fancy. Henry Moore was the intimate friend of Wesley, as well as his biographer, and it is not easy to understand how he could be mistaken in the matter, but there is no hint of 'the great man' being Frederick in the *Journal*, either in the passage quoted, or in several later passages which refer unflatteringly to the great King of Prussia. Moreover, it is difficult to understand how he could be doing the work of a city magistrate at Weimar, which was not in Prussian occupation, as Halle was. And, finally, Frederick would appear to have been in another part of the country altogether at that time, spending most of July and August in that year upon a visit to the Duchy of Cleves and Loo in Holland.

In 1776 John Wesley published *An Extract of the Life of Madame Guion*. He had long been a critical student of her life and writings.

In 1742 he records in his *Journal* that he read Madame Guyon's *Les Torrents Spirituels*. It would seem probable that Charles Wesley read it a few years later, for there appear to be traces of it in some hymns published in the *Hymns and Sacred Poems* of 1749. The imagery of the following passages runs through the whole of the *Spiritual Torrents*. 'All have a loving impatience to purify themselves, and to adopt the necessary ways and means of returning to their source and origin, like rivers, which after leaving their source, flow on continuously in order to precipitate themselves into the sea. . . . Finally . . . they reach the sea, where they are lost to be found no more . . . it is the sea, and yet it is the river, because the river, being lost in the sea, has become one with it.'

This thought is reflected in the lines:

Wherefore to Thee I all resign;
 Being Thou art, and love, and power;
 Thy only will be done, not mine!
 Thee, Lord, let earth and heaven adore!
Flow back the rivers to the sea,
And let our all be lost in Thee!

and in the lines:

Our love from earthly dross refine:
Holy, angelical, divine,
Thee its great Author let it show,
And back to the pure Fountain flow,
A drop of that unbounded sea,
O Lord, resorb it into Thee!

Another favourite image appears in this passage: 'Therefore the heart of man is perpetually in motion, and can find no rest until it returns to its origin and centre, which is God: like fire, which, being removed from its sphere, is in continual agitation, and does not rest till it has returned to it.' This is reflected in another stanza of the last hymn quoted:

A spark of that ethereal fire,
Still let it to its Source aspire:
To Thee in every wish return,
Intensely for Thy glory burn,
While all our souls fly up to Thee,
And blaze through all eternity!

William Law was a mystic if there ever was one, and he was the early master of both brothers. They parted company with him, it is true, but he had an abiding influence upon them. As late as 1768, John Wesley published a volume of extracts from Law's later writings. Many illustrations of Law's influence might be given. There are some favourite ideas of Charles Wesley's which appear in the hymns again and again. Such is the thought that the regenerate soul is a reflection of the Holy Trinity:

O that we now, in love renewed,
Might blameless in Thy sight appear!
Wake me in Thy similitude,
Stamp'd with the Triune character;
Flesh, spirit, soul, to Thee resign,
And live and die entirely Thine!

And when we rise, in love renewed,
 Our souls resemble Thee,
An image of the Triune God
 To all eternity.

Made like the first happy pair,
 Let us here Thy nature share
 Holy, pure, and perfect be,
Transcripts of the Trinity.

... a sinless saint
 In perfect love renewed;
 A mirror of the Deity,
A transcript of the One in Three,
 A temple filled with God!

Charles Wesley once commented upon these last lines, which had been criticized. In a letter to his wife he wrote:

You and the other objectors do not understand those lines. 'A transcript of the One in Three' is the definition of man unfallen, and of man restored to the divine image. The expression is Mr. Law's, not mine; who proves a trinity throughout all nature.

The thought recurs perpetually in the writings of William Law.¹ In *An Appeal to all who doubt the Truths of the Gospel*, he writes:

How could the Holy Trinity be an object of Man's worship and adoration, if the Holy Trinity had not produced itself in Man? . . . Our redemption consists in nothing else but in the *Bringing forth* this new Birth in us . . . that, being thus born again in the *Likeness* of the Holy Trinity, we may be capable of its threefold Blessing and Happiness.

In *Christian Regeneration* he writes:

We have before shown, that Man was created a *living Image* of the Holy Trinity in Unity, that the *Divine Birth* arose in him, and *that* Father, Son, and Holy Ghost saw themselves in him, in a *creaturely*

¹ Cf. St. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, xi, 26.

Manner. . . . There appears a surprising Agreeableness and Fitness, in the Means of our Redemption, namely, that we could *only* be saved by the *eternal Son* of God; that He could only save us by taking *our Nature* upon Him, and so uniting it with Him, that His *Life*, or *Birth*, might again *arise* in us, as at the first, and so we become again a perfect living Image of the Holy Trinity.

The notion also occurs in Byrom's writings. In *An Epistle to a Gentleman of the Temple* there are the lines describing Adam:

Formed in the likeness of the sacred Three,
He stood immortal, powerful, and free;
Image of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
The destined sire of a new heavenly host.

Byrom and Law had ploughed with the same heifer. They got the thought from Jacob Böhme, who wrote:

So near thee, indeed, is God, that the birth of the Holy Trinity takes place in thy heart also, and there all Three Persons are born, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (*Aurora*, c. x, 58).

THE HYMNS AND THE POETS

THERE are occasional reminiscences of the Latin poets in the hymns, naturally, for the Wesleys were good classical scholars. Charles Wesley once defended himself against the abuse of that virago, his brother's wife, by reciting Virgil at the top of his voice. Judging by their quotations, Virgil was his favourite Latin poet, as Horace was his brother John's.

The most distinct allusion to Virgil that I have traced is in a hymn which paraphrases a famous passage in the sixth book of the *Aeneid* (724-9):

Principio caelum ac terras camposque liquentis
 Lucentemque globum Lunae Titaniaque astra
 Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus
 Mens agitat molem et magno se corpore miscet.
 Inde hominum pecudumque genus vitaeque volantum
 Et quae marmoreo fert monstra sub aequore pontus.

It is evident that this has coloured the thought of some of the following lines:

That all-informing breath Thou art
 Who dost continued life impart,
 And bid'st the world persist to be;
 Garnished by Thee, yon azure sky
 And all those beauteous orbs on high
 Depend in golden chains from Thee.

Thou art the Universal Soul,
 The plastic power that fills the whole,
 And governs earth, air, sea, and sky;
 The creatures all Thy breath receive,
 And who by Thy inspiring live,
 Without Thy inspiration die.

Spirit immense, eternal Mind,
That on the souls of lost mankind
Dost with benignest influence move.
Pleased to restore the ruined race,
And new-create a world of grace
In all the image of Thy love!

The most striking allusion to Horace is in the hymn, 'Stand the omnipotent decree!'—which, while a paraphrase of a passage in Young's *Night Thoughts*, is yet influenced by the ode, *Fustum et tenacem propositi virum*:

Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinae (iii, 3).

Let this earth dissolve and blend
In death the wicked and the just,
Let those ponderous orbs descend
And grind us into dust.
Rests secure the righteous man!

Apart from these examples, any reminiscences of the Latin poets in the hymns must be almost entirely confined to single phrases. Considering the wide difference in subject and style between the epic or the ode of a pagan poet and a Christian hymn, there cannot well be many examples of parallel passages of any length. Generally, it will be merely in the turn of a phrase that one detects an allusion. And here a genuine difficulty is encountered. For eighteenth-century English poetry was slavishly dependent upon the classics, and is full of echoes of the Latin poets. So that one can never be quite sure whether the Wesleys were directly recalling a classical phrase, or merely remembering a line in Dryden or Prior that was itself an echo of the classics.

Thus, for example, when one reads the lines—

To Him mine eye of faith I turn,
And through the fire pursue my way;
The fire forgets its power to burn,
The *lambent flames* around me play.

it is natural to think of Virgil's *lambere flamma*, in his description of the supernatural fire that played around the head of Iulus, at the sack of Troy, during the hesitation of Anchises. But then the very phrase is used by Dryden—

E'en Love (for Love sometimes her Muse exprest)
Was but a *lambent flame* which played about her breast,

and Cowley has the lines:

The star that did my being frame,
Was but a *lambent flame*,
And some small light it did dispense,
But neither heat nor influence.

So one is tempted to think that phrases such as 'Breathe unutterable love', 'Fix, O fix my wavering mind', may be recollections of Virgil's *infandum amorem* (iv, 85) and *animum labantem* (the phrase so frequent in the *Aeneid*). Similarly, 'Shall I, to soothe the unholy throng', 'The greedy sea shall yield her dead', may perhaps recall Horace's *profanum vulgus* (iii, i) and *avidum mare* (i, 28). But probably each of these phrases could be paralleled in the English poets of the early eighteenth century.

We may feel a good deal more certain that there is an actual allusion to Horace in one of the hymns written for the Thanksgiving Day, November 20, 1759:

Who rest beneath the Almighty's wings
May cast their cares away:
Whate'er event to-morrow brings,
We live for God to-day.

For this is a deliberate improvement upon the sentiment of the Latin poet (iii, 29):

Ille^m potens sui
Laetusque deget, cui licet in diem
Dixisse, Vixi: cras vel atra
Nube₄ polum Pater occupato,

Vel sole puro; non tamen irritum,
Quodcumque retrost, efficiet: neque
Diffinget, infectumque reddet,
Quod fugiens semel hora vexit.

A verse of one of the 'Hymns on the Earthquake'—

In vain ye change your place,
If still unchanged your mind:
Or fly to distant climes, unless
Ye leave your sins behind,

is also a clear remembrance of the famous line of Horace (*Ep.*, i, 11):

Caelum, non animum mutant, qui trans mare currunt.

And the lines in a version of Psalm cxxxiii—

On all His chosen ones
The precious oil comes down:
It runs, and as it runs
It ever will run on,

manifestly recall another famous line of the same poet (*Ep.*, i, 2):

Labitur, et labetur in omne volubilis aevum.

There are several references in the hymns to the beautiful tradition of 'the golden age', such as the lines in a hymn on Isaiah lx. 17, 18:

Your souls shall take a finer mould,
The Jewish into Christian pass,
The iron age be turned to gold;

and in another hymn on Malachi iii. 4:

Returns the age of golden days,
The vigorous energy of grace,
That in Thine ancient servants shone;

and in the hymn entitled 'Primitive Christianity':

O what an age of golden days!
O what a choice, peculiar race!

There are passages in several of the Latin poets which treat of the golden age, and *Astraea redux*. As familiar as any is that in the famous Fourth Eclogue of Virgil:

Iam nova progenies caelo demittitur alto.
Tu modo nascenti puero, quo ferrea primum
Desinet ac toto surget gens aurea mundo,
Casta fare Lucina.

In the lines—

Garnished by Thee, yon azure sky
And all those beauteous orbs on high
Depend in *golden chains* from Thee,

there is apparently an allusion to the σειρήν χρυσεῖην of Homer (*Iliad*, viii, 19).¹ The same passage is also recalled in some lines in Charles Wesley's 'Epistle to the Rev. George Whitefield':

Fast bound with love's indissoluble chain
(That adamant which time and death defies,
That *golden chain* which draws us to the skies!)

There are a good many references to familiar classical myths and tales. Thus an Advent hymn alludes to the story of the infant Hercules strangling in his cradle the serpents which Hera had sent to destroy him:

Those infant hands
Shall burst our bands,
And work out our salvation.

Strangle the crooked serpent,
Destroy his works for ever,
And open set
The heavenly gate
To every true believer.

¹ Probably with a recollection of Plato's comment, *Theaetetus*, 153.

One of the 'Hymns for a Family', which deals with the training of children, has an allusion to Ariadne's thread, which guided Theseus out of the labyrinth of the Minotaur:

Their selfish will by times subdue,
And mortify their pride,
And lend their youth a sacred clue
To find the Crucified.

The fable that Amphion made the stones move, and built the walls of Thebes by the music of his lyre, is referred to in the lines:

Ah, join me to Thy secret ones!
Ah, gather all Thy living stones!
Scattered o'er all the earth they lie,
Till Thou collect them with Thine eye,
Draw by the music of Thy name,
And charm into a beauteous frame.

And more clearly still in the lines:

So shall I charm the listening throng,
And draw the living stones along,
By Jesu's tuneful name:
The living stones shall dance, shall rise,
And form a city in the skies,
The New Jerusalem!

The lines—

Show me the naked sword
Impending o'er my head,
O let me tremble at Thy word!
And to my ways take heed,

recall the famous story of Damocles and the sword which hung over his head by a single hair during his borrowed state.

And there is also at least one allusion to Roman history. Caesar's famous dispatch to the Senate after his victory over Pharnaces, near Zela, in Pontus, *Veni, vidi, vici*, is recalled with a difference in the lines, in a version of Psalm xlviii:

Lo! their boast is turned to shame!
 Struck with sore amaze and dread,
 Marching towards her walls they came,
 They came—they saw—they fled!

When we come to the English poets, it is interesting to remember that Wesley's annotated copy of Shakespeare was destroyed by John Pawson, who evidently thought that the very existence of such a thing would be a scandal to the godly. This is probably no great loss: most likely the notes were only a few parallel passages from the Greek and Latin classics. Wesley had little or none of that knowledge of our older English literature that is necessary to an annotator of the plays, and in any case he was not the man to appreciate the 'wide naturalism' of Shakespeare. But Wesley quotes Shakespeare (as Pawson might have remembered) half a dozen times in his *Journal*, and in his *Diary* there are about the same number of references to reading the poet. It is curious to note that most of these occasions when he records that he has been reading the plays are in his later life. The most striking case of actual quotation is in the *Journal* for October 3, 1771. Wesley was at Winchester, and he writes: 'I now found time to take a view of the Cathedral. Here the sight of that bad Cardinal's tomb, whom the sculptor has placed in a posture of prayer, brought to my mind those fine lines of Shakespeare, which he puts into the mouth of King Henry the Sixth:

'Lord Cardinal,
 If thou hast any hope of heaven's grace,
 Give us a sign. He dies, and makes no sign.'

The lines are quoted from memory, and incorrectly. They are in the *Second Part of King Henry the Sixth* (iii, 3), and run:

Lord Cardinal, if thou think'st on Heaven's bliss,
 Hold up thy hand, make signal of thy hope.
 He dies, and makes no sign.

These lines were obviously in Charles Wesley's mind when he wrote, in a hymn on Preparation for Death:

What profit is there in my death,
 What glory to the grace divine,
 If sad I sigh my latest breath,
 And hopeless die—*without a sign?*

There seems to be a recollection of Shakespeare in the lines—

Eager for Thee I ask and pant,
 So strong the principle divine
 Carries me out with *sweet constraint*,
 Till all my hallowed soul is Thine,
 Plunged in the Godhead's deepest sea,
 And lost in Thine immensity!

for they recall Bertram's words to Diana in *All's Well that Ends Well* (iv, 2):

But I love thee
 By love's own *sweet constraint*, and will for ever
 Do thee all rights of service.

There is another possible recollection of Shakespeare in one of John Wesley's finest translations, for the phrase in the lines—

More hard than marble is my heart,
 And foul with sins of deepest stain;
 But Thou the mighty Saviour art,
 Nor flowed Thy cleansing blood in vain,

may recall Lear's words (i, 4):

Ingratitude, thou *marble-hearted* fiend,
 More hideous when thou show'st thee in a child
 Than the sea-monster!

but Young has 'marble hearts', and it is perhaps hardly necessary to look for any source with a phrase so natural. Gerhardt's German is merely:

Mein Herz hingegen böser Art,
 Und hart gleich einem Steine.

This hymn—*O Jesu Christ, mein schönstes Licht*—is Gerhardt's

paraphrase of the prayer concerning the love of Christ in Arndt's *Paradies-gärtlein* (ii, 5, 53).

The English poets of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have influenced the hymns very considerably, especially Milton, George Herbert, Dryden, Prior, and Young.

The influence of Milton is visible everywhere in the hymns. The great Puritan poet is the source of many of their striking phrases, and his influence upon the poetic style of the Wesleys is greater, perhaps, than that of any other writer. John Wesley apparently knew a great part of *Paradise Lost* by heart. At Kingswood, in 1750, he 'selected passages of Milton for the eldest children to transcribe and repeat weekly'. Later—in 1763—he published *An Extract from Milton's Paradise Lost*, and in the Preface declared that 'Of all the poems which have hitherto appeared in the world, in whatever age or nation, the preference has generally been given by impartial judges to Milton's *Paradise Lost*'.

One or two passages in which the hymns reflect the language of the great poet are well known. Thus:

O dark, dark, dark, I still must say
Amid the blaze of gospel day,

is a reminiscence of the wonderful plaint of the blinded giant in *Samson Agonistes*:

Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half,
O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon
Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse,
Without all hope of day!

And the fine stanza—

With Thee conversing, I forget
All time, and toil, and care;
Labour is rest, and pain is sweet,
If Thou, my God, art here,

deliberately recalls the words of Eve to Adam:

With thee conversing, I forget all time,
All seasons and their change; all please alike.

There are many other examples, however, less obvious than these, or at any rate less noticed, which are yet unmistakable allusions to Milton. For instance—

Thine arm hath safely brought us
A way no more expected
Than when Thy sheep passed through the deep
By *crystal walls* protected,

reminds us of the lines:

As on dry land, between two crystal walls,
Awed by the rod of Moses so to stand
Divided till his rescued gain their shore.

The quoted phrase, by the way, occurs a second time in *Paradise Lost*.

The first apostrophe in—

O *unexampled Love!*
O all-redeeming Grace!
How swiftly didst Thou move
To save a fallen race! . . .

is from the same source:

. . . O unexampled Love!
Love nowhere to be found less than divine!

In the lines—

But above all lay hold
On faith's victorious shield,
Armed with that adamant and gold
Be sure to win the field,

the poet of Methodism has borrowed his vivid phrase from the description of the arch-fiend—

Satan, with vast and haughty strides advanced,
Came towering, armed in adamant and gold.

In the verse—

With glorious clouds encompassed round,
Whom angels *dimly see*,
Will the Unsearchable be found,
Or God appear to me?

there is a remembrance of the address to the Most High put into the mouths of our first parents in the fifth book of the poem:

Unspeakable! Who sitt'st above these heavens
To us invisible, or dimly seen.

The one majestic phrase in the stanza—

From heaven angelic voices sound,
See the almighty Jesus crowned!
Girt with omnipotence and grace
And glory decks the Saviour's face!

is from the discourse of Raphael:

... meanwhile the Son,
On His great expedition now appeared,
Girt with omnipotence, with radiance crowned.

Behind Milton's phrase there is, of course, the language of Psalm lxxv. 6.

The stanza in one of the hymns on Holiness—

He wills that I should holy be,
That holiness I long to feel,
That full, *divine conformity*
To all my Saviour's blessed will,

borrowes a phrase from the address of Michael:

... Judge not what is best
By pleasure, though to Nature seeming meet,
Created, as thou art, to nobler end,
Holy and pure, conformity divine.

Charles Wesley wrote, in another hymn:

For every sinful action
Thou hast atonement made,
The rigid satisfaction
Thy precious death hath paid.

The striking phrase is a quotation from Milton:

Die he or justice must; unless for him
Some other, able, and as willing, pay
The rigid satisfaction, death for death.

The lines—

That sudden flash of heavenly light
Which once broke in upon my night,
Has made my *darkness visible*,
And left me to a deeper hell,

recall Milton's phrase in his description of the flaming hell into which Satan was cast:

yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible
Served only to discover sights of woe.

One phrase which occurs often in the hymns of the Wesleys is particularly unfortunate; I mean that awkward ellipsis 'the stony':

The stony from my heart remove,
And give me, Lord, O give me love,
Or at Thy feet I die.

It sounds unpleasantly like Mr. Swiveller's references to the rosy and the mazy. But the Wesleys were following the Miltonic usage, seen, to give one example only, in the lines:

... For from the mercy-seat above
Prevenient grace descending had removed
The stony from their hearts.

A phrase from the magnificent lines with which the third

book of *Paradise Lost* begins was used by the Wesleys again and again:

Hail, holy Light! offspring of heaven first-born!
Or of the Eternal co-eternal Beam.

This is remembered in the beginning of a hymn—

*Eternal Beam of Light Divine,
Fountain of unexhausted Love,*

and in the closing lines of one of John Wesley's splendid translations:

*Thou Beam of the Eternal Beam,
Thou purging Fire, Thou quickening Flame!*

There is nothing corresponding to this in Tersteegen's German. It is John Wesley's remembrance of Milton. Doubtless the word had behind it, in the thought of both Milton and Wesley, the ἀπαύγασμα of the Apostolic writer in Hebrews i. 3.

George Herbert was a favourite poet with both the Wesleys. They adapted a considerable number of pieces from *The Temple* as hymns, and included them in their early publications. They must have been familiar with Herbert from childhood, for he was one of the writers most beloved by Susanna Wesley, and probably they hardly knew when they were echoing his words. The line in *Obedience*—

O let Thy sacred will
All Thy delight in me fulfil!

is borrowed in John Wesley's translation of Zinzendorf's *Du ewiger Abgrund der seligen Liebe*:

The dictates of Thy sovereign will,
With joy our grateful hearts receive;
All Thy delight in us fulfil;
Lo! all we are to Thee we give.

The first stanza of *A True Hymn*—

My joy, my life, my crown!
 My heart was meaning all the day,
 Somewhat it fain would say:
 And still it runneth muttering up and down
 With only this, 'My joy, my life, my crown!'

has influenced the language of another of John Wesley's translations, his great version of Scheffler's *Ich will dich lieben, meine Stärke*, where, in the last verse—

Thee will I love, *my joy, my crown*,
 Thee will I love, my Lord, my God!

represents:

Ich will dich lieben, meine Krone,
 Ich will dich lieben, meinen Gott.

And, curiously enough, in still another hymn from the German, John Wesley's version of Joachim Lange's *O Jesu, süßes Licht*, the lines—

O God, what offering shall I give
 To Thee, the Lord of earth and skies?
 My spirit, soul, and flesh receive,
 A holy, living sacrifice;
 Small as it is, 'tis all my store;
More should'st Thou have, if I had more,

suggest a recollection of Herbert's *Praise*:

To write a verse or two is all the praise
 That I can raise:
 Mend my estate in any ways
 Thou shalt have more.

The last lines of the verse in Lange's German are merely
 'Das soll mein Opfer sein, Weil ich sonst nichts vermag'.

A phrase in *The Pulley*—

Let us (said He) pour on Him all we can:
 Let the world's riches, which dispersèd lie,
 Contract into a span,

is remembered and used nobly in a hymn for the Nativity:

Our God, *contracted to a span*,
 Incomprehensibly made man.

The lines in *Longing*—

Lord Jesu, Thou didst bow
 Thy dying head upon the tree,

are recalled in the verse:

Vessels, instruments of grace,
 Pass we thus our happy days
 'Twixt the mount and multitude,
 Doing or receiving good;
 Glad to pray and labour on,
 Till our earthly course is run,
 Till we, *on the sacred tree*,
Bow the head, and die like Thee.

The line in *Sunday*—

O let me take thee at the bound,
 Leaping with thee from seven to seven,
 Till that we both, being tossed from earth,
 Fly hand in hand to heaven!

is remembered in another hymn:

Let us all together rise,
 To Thy glorious life restored,
 Here regain our paradise,
 Here prepare to meet our Lord;
 Here enjoy the earnest given,
Travel hand in hand to heaven!

And the thought in *Praise*—

Small it is, in this poor sort
 To enrol Thee:
 E'en eternity is too short
 To extol Thee,

is remembered in a version of one of the Psalms:

*And all eternity shall prove
Too short to utter all His love.*

Francis Quarles was a poet not much in fashion in the eighteenth century. He has a place in the *Dunciad*:

Or where the pictures for the page atone,
And Quarles is saved by beauties not his own,

as the father of the Wesleys is said to have had, in one of the early editions of the satire. Samuel Wesley would hardly have protested against finding himself in Quarles' company, for in his *Epistle to a Friend concerning Poetry* he had written of Dryden:

If there's hereafter, and a last Great Day,
What fire's enough to purge his stains away?
How will he wish each lewd applauded line,
Which makes vice pleasing, and damnation shine,
Had been as dull as honest Quarles', or mine!

There are several reminiscences of 'honest Quarles' in the hymns. A phrase which occurs in *The Invocation*—

... let thy pinions soar
So high a pitch, that men may seem no more
Than pismires, crawling on the molehill earth,
Thine ear untroubled with their frantic mirth,

is borrowed in a hymn for the Watchnight:

How many pass the guilty night
In revellings and *frantic mirth*!
The creature is their sole delight,
Their happiness the things of earth.

A line in one of the *Emblems* (v, 6)—

Pleasure's but pain, and mirth but pleasing madness
Without Thee, Lord,

is recollected in the stanza:

Their joy is all sadness, their mirth is all vain,
Their laughter is madness, their pleasure is pain.

And the thought in the same *Emblem*—

But what is Heaven, great God, compared to Thee?
 Without Thy presence, Heaven's no Heaven to me,

may be reflected in the verse:

Thy gifts, alas, cannot suffice
 Unless Thyself be given:
*Thy presence makes my Paradise,
 And where Thou art is heaven!*

Some of the reminiscences of Dryden's lines in the hymns are striking and unmistakable, and altogether the allusions are enough to show a pretty close acquaintance on the part of the Wesleys with nearly all that the poet wrote.

Charles Wesley's fine evening hymn—

All praise to Him who dwells in bliss,
 Who made both day and night:
*Whose Throne is darkness in the abyss
 Of uncreated light,*

deliberately borrows a great line from *The Hind and the Panther*:

But, gracious God, how well dost Thou provide
 For erring judgements an unerring Guide!
 Thy throne is darkness in the abyss of light,
 A blaze of glory that forbids the sight.

One of the hymns for the Nativity recalls another line from the same poem, for—

*Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
 Hail the incarnate Deity!*

is an echo of Dryden's argument for Transubstantiation:

Could He His Godhead veil in flesh and blood,
And not veil these again to be our food?

The hymn—

Love Divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heaven, to earth come down,
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling,
All Thy faithful mercies crown,

owes both its trochaic metre and the form of its first line to the 'Song of Venus' in *King Arthur*:

Fairest Isle, all isles excelling,
Seat of pleasures and of loves;
Venus here will choose her dwelling,
And forsake her Cyprian groves.

One of the hymns for Advent—

Stupendous height of heavenly love,
Of pitying tenderness divine!
It brought the Saviour from above,
It caused the springing day to shine,
The Sun of Righteousness to appear,
And gild our gloomy hemisphere,

adopts a phrase from the juvenile and affected *Elegy upon the Death of Lord Hastings*:

Lived Tycho now, struck with this ray (which shone
More bright i' th' morn than others beam at noon),
He'd take his astrolabe and seek out here,
What new star 'twas did gild our hemisphere.

The verse—

The things unknown to feeble sense,
Unseen by *reason's glimmering ray*
With strong commanding evidence,
Their heavenly origin display,

owes a phrase to the *Religio Laici*:

So reason's glimmering ray
Was lent, not to assure our doubtful way,
But guide us upward to a better day.

The hymn—

O God of God, in whom combine
The heights and depths of love divine,
With thankful hearts to Thee we sing:
To Thee our longing souls aspire,
In fervent flames of strong desire:
Come, and Thy sacred unction bring!

borrowes an entire line from Dryden's translation of the *Veni, Creator Spiritus*:

Come, and Thy sacred unction bring
To sanctify us while we sing!

One of the Penitential hymns echoes a phrase of Dryden's which he used in a very different connection. Wesley wrote—

The godly grief, *the pleasing smart*,
The meltings of a broken heart,

evidently remembering a lively love-song in *The Maiden Queen*:

I feel a flame within which so torments me
That it both pains my heart and yet contents me;
'Tis such a pleasing smart, and I so love it,
That I would rather die than once remove it.

And there are several other cases where single phrases or striking epithets of Dryden's have passed, perhaps unconsciously, into the hymns. So Wesley's 'O'er earth *in endless circles roved*', is an echo of *Religio Laici*, 'Thus anxious thoughts in endless circles roll'; and '*the all-atoning Lamb*' (which occurs frequently in the hymns) borrows the epithet from a line in *Absalom and Achitophel*:

Then, seized with fear, yet still affecting fame,
Usurped a patriot's all-atoning name.

It looks as if some memory of Waller's lines in *Divine Poesy* (i, 43)—

The church triumphant and the church below,
In songs of praise their present union show;
Their joys are full, our expectation long;
In life we differ, but we join in song,

is behind the stanza:

The church triumphant in 'Thy love,
Their mighty joys we know:
They sing the Lamb in hymns above:
And we in hymns below.

There are one or two allusions to Cowley. In the verses entitled *Life* occur the lines:

But angels in their full-enlightened state,
Angels who live, and know what 'tis to be!
Who all the nonsense of our language see,
And words, our ill-drawn pictures, scorn,
When we, by a foolish figure, say,
Behold an old man dead! then they
Speak properly, and say, Behold a man-child born!

This is recalled in one of the finest of the Funeral hymns:

When from flesh the spirit freed,
Hastens homeward to return,
Mortals cry, 'A man is dead!'
Angels sing, "A child is born!"

There is a slighter parallel in Prior, a favourite poet with both the Wesleys:

And while the buried man we idly mourn,
Do angels joy to see his better half return?

A hymn, popularly supposed to have been written at Land's

End, but apparently inspired by a visit which Charles Wesley paid to a promontory in Georgia,¹ has the lines:

Lo! on a narrow neck of land
 'Twixt two unbounded seas I stand
 Secure, insensible.

Cowley has the thought in *Life*:

Vain, weak-built isthmus which dost proudly rise
 Up betwixt two eternities.

The comparison was frequent in the eighteenth century. Prior wrote in *Solomon*:

Amid two seas on one small point of land,
 Wearied, uncertain, and amazed we stand.

And Pope, in the *Essay on Man*:

Placed on this isthmus of a middle state,
 A being darkly wise, and rudely great.

Addison has the thought in the *Spectator*, in language which supplies the closest parallel of all:

In our speculations of Eternity, we consider the Time which is present to us the Middle, which divides the whole time into two equal Parts. For this Reason, many witty Authors compare the present Time to an Isthmus or *narrow Neck of Land* that rises in the midst of an ocean, immeasurably diffused on either Side of it.

In John Wesley's translation of Ernst Lange's great hymn, *O Gott, du Tiefe sonder Grund!*—'O God, Thou bottomless Abyss!'—he borrowed a phrase from the fulsome lines in which Addison dedicated his tragedy of *Cato* to the Princess of Wales. Addison wrote:

The deathless muse with undiminished rays
 Through distant times the lovely dame conveys.

¹ See Telford, *Life of Charles Wesley*, pp. 244-6.

Wesley remembered and used the phrase:

Greatness unspeakable is Thine,
Greatness, whose *undiminished* ray,
When short-lived worlds are lost, shall shine,
When earth and heaven are fled away!

Wesley thought so highly of this hymn (and well he might) that he included it in that collection of standard English verse, mainly extracted from Milton, Cowley, Prior and Pope, which he made at the request of Lady Huntingdon, and dedicated to her.

Not long before his death, John Wesley said to Dr. Adam Clarke: 'God raised up Mr. Addison and his associates to lash the prevailing vices and ridiculous and vain customs of the country, and to show the excellence of Christianity and Christian institutions. The *Spectators*, written with all the simplicity, elegance, and force of the English language, were everywhere read, and were the first instruments in the hands of God to check the mighty and growing profanity, and call men back to religion and decency and common sense. Methodism, in the order of God, succeeded, and revived and spread Scriptural and experimental Christianity over the nation. And now what hath God wrought!'

There are several evidences in the hymns of that familiarity with Addison's *Spectator* which we should expect on the part of the Wesleys. A line of Addison's version of Psalm xxiii (which Wesley republished in the *Collection of Psalms and Hymns* of 1738)—

Thy friendly Crook shall give me Aid,
And guide me through the dreadful Shade,

is borrowed in one of the Advent hymns:

And cheer the souls of death afraid,
And guide them through the dreadful shade.

Dr. John Duncan once remarked upon the *curiosa felicitas* of a line in the stanza:

All are not lost and wandered back,
 All have not left Thy Church and Thee;
 There are who suffer for Thy sake,
 Enjoy *Thy glorious infamy*,
 Esteem the scandal of the Cross,
 And only seek divine applause.

The happy phrase is borrowed, with a variation, from an apostrophe in the paper which Steele contributed to the *Spectator*, on Good Friday, 1712 (it is really reprinted from *The Christian Hero*): 'See where they have nailed the Lord and Giver of Life! How His wounds blacken, His Body writhes, and Heart heaves with Pity and with Agony! O Almighty Sufferer, look down, look down from *Thy triumphant Infamy!*'

But the most striking illustration of the influence of the *Spectator* is an example in which the verse of Charles Wesley was considerably indebted to a French sonnet quoted by Addison in its pages—an indebtedness which was first indicated, in a very roundabout fashion, by no less an eighteenth-century personage than Mrs. Piozzi.

In 1745 the Rev. Thomas Church (the friend of Bolingbroke), who was Vicar of Battersea and Prebendary of St. Paul's, published a pamphlet entitled *Remarks on the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Last Journal*. He was one of the fairest of Wesley's innumerable critics. Thirty years afterwards, Wesley referred to him in contrast with Rowland Hill, and said that he was 'a gentleman, a scholar, and a Christian: and as such he both spoke and wrote'. In the *Remarks* Church attacked the 'extravagancy and presumption' of the lines:

Doom, if Thou canst, to endless pains,
 And drive me from Thy face;
 But if Thy stronger love constrains,
 Let me be saved by grace!

Wesley answered the *Remarks* in a letter addressed to the author, and a second pamphlet, *Some Further Remarks*, in a second letter. He expressed a natural amazement that the lines should have been so grossly misunderstood, and defended them as being 'one of the strongest forms of obtestation, of adjuring God to show mercy, by all His grace, and truth, and love'.

Four years later, in 1749, Lavington, a much less reputable antagonist, repeated Church's attack. He quoted the same lines, and reiterated the charge of presumption, in *The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists Compared*. A copy of the first edition of the first part of Lavington's book was in the possession of Mrs. Piozzi, that lively lady who was Mrs. Thrale in earlier life, the friend of Dr. Johnson, and familiar to all readers of Boswell. She was very fond of writing marginal comments in her books. One of her biographers has remarked upon the habit. She enriched the margin of Lavington's book with considerable annotations. One of these is a comment on the lines he quoted: 'Doom, if Thou canst, to endless pains, And drive me from Thy face!' She says that they are 'in imitation of the famous French sonnet by Despréaux, but by an awkwardness of expression seem to lay the Supreme Being under constraint of destiny, and that is neither good philosophy nor good religion. In the French sonnet there is no such fault.'

I was unable to discover any sonnet by the famous poet Despréaux, better known as Boileau, which fits this reference; nor is he very likely to have written such a one. This is, in fact, an example of the trivial inaccuracy for which Boswell so often reproaches Mrs. Piozzi. For it is a famous sonnet by *Des Barreaux*, a poet of the generation immediately preceding Boileau, of which she was thinking. The editors of the old collection of French poetry¹ in which I found it say that the reputation of Des Barreaux 'rests upon a single sonnet, which is perhaps the masterpiece of that kind of verse' (*le chef-d'œuvre de ce genre*). Almost immediately after finding this, I happened

¹ *Les Poètes Français depuis le XIIe Siècle jusqu'à Malherbe* (1824).

upon an essay of Addison's in the *Spectator*, in which he quotes the sonnet in full, and describes it as 'a noble hymn in French . . . written by Monsieur Des Barreaux, who had been one of the greatest wits and libertines in France, but in his last years as remarkable a penitent'.

Jacques Vallée, Seigneur des Barreaux, was born in 1602, and died in 1673. He was a counsellor in the Parliament of Paris, but would never plead a cause, and eventually resigned the office, according to some accounts, that he might devote himself wholly to pleasure. Another story is that Cardinal Richelieu fell in love with the famous Marion de Lorme,¹ who was Des Barreaux's mistress, and that after the Cardinal had made some overtures to Des Barreaux, which he rejected, Richelieu became his determined enemy, and forced him to give up his office, and leave Paris.²

Des Barreaux wrote many Latin and French verses, but never published anything. Pascal makes a casual reference to him. Writing in the *Pensées* of the war between reason and passion, he alleges Des Barreaux as an example of 'those who would renounce their reason and become brute beasts'. He lived an exceedingly dissolute life, but in his later years repented and reformed, and spent his last days in religious retirement at Chalon-sur-Saône.

He wrote this sonnet three or four years before his death. It is entitled 'A Sinner's Recourse to the Goodness of God'. I have translated it thus:

O God, just are Thy judgements, just and right!
 Vast is Thy mercy, and Thy patience long;
 But I have done such evil in Thy sight
 As to forgive would do Thy justice wrong.
 Sin has annulled Thy love's prerogative;
 Thou canst not pardon such a wretch as I,
 Thy righteousness forbids Thee to forgive,
 Thy mercy must stand helpless while I die.

¹ The heroine of Victor Hugo's drama.

² Bayle, *Dictionnaire*, vol. iv, pp. 577-81.

Then take Thy vengeance, Lord—I plead no more—
 Mock at my tears, who mocked Thee to Thy face;
 Strike, slay! avenge Thee on my hardihood—
 I perish, yet Thy justice I adore;
 But where shall fall Thy thunders? on what place
 That is not covered with the Saviour's blood?¹

The last lines of the French are:

Tonne, frappe, il est temps, rends-moi guerre pour guerre;
 J'adore en perissant la raison qui t'aigrit;
 Mais dessus quel endroit tombera ton tonnerre,
 Qui ne soit tout couvert du sang de Jesus-Christ!

Charles Wesley must have seen this sonnet in the *Spectator*, and, besides, a letter is extant, written to him by John Fletcher, which quotes some lines of it as if they were perfectly familiar to them both.² Fletcher is describing his own experience at that time, when he was passing through a season of spiritual depression: 'It seemed altogether incompatible with the holiness, the justice, and the veracity of the Supreme Being to admit so stubborn an offender into His presence. I could do nothing but be astonished at the patience of God; and I would willingly have sung those verses of Desbaraux [*sic*] if I had had strength:

'Tonne, frappe, il est temps, rends-moi guerre pour guerre;
 J'adore en perissant la raison qui t'aigrit.'

¹ I have discovered in my reading of late years what I did not know when this book was first written, that two English versions of the sonnet exist—one by Dr. Watts, entitled *The Humble Enquiry, A French Sonnet Imitated*, beginning, 'Grace rules below, and sits enthron'd above, How few the sparks of wrath! how slow they move!' and one by Henry Kirke White, simply headed *From the French of M. Desbarreux* [*sic*] beginning, 'Thy judgments, Lord, are just; Thou lov'st to wear, The face of pity and of love divine'. I have retained my own translation, because it is a good deal closer than either of these renderings.

² Tyerman, *Life of Fletcher*, p. 43.

There is no doubt that the sonnet has considerably influenced the verse of Charles Wesley. There are echoes of it in—

But if my gracious day is past,
And I am banished from Thy sight,
When into outer darkness cast,
My Judge, I'll own, hath done me right,
Adore the Hand whose stroke I feel,
Nor murmur when I sink to hell,

and:

Then pour Thy vengeance on my head,
And quench the smoking flax in me;
Break (if Thou canst) a bruised reed,
And cast me out who come to Thee,

and:

While groaning at Thy feet I fall,
Spurn me away, refuse my call;
If love permit, contract Thy brow
And if Thou canst, destroy me now!

But there are some lines in one of the Eucharistic hymns which put the matter beyond doubt, for the allusion to the last lines of the sonnet is exact and unmistakable:

Still the wounds are open wide,
The blood doth freely flow,
As when first His sacred side
Received the deadly blow;
Still, O God, the blood is warm,
Covered with the blood we are;
Find a part it doth not arm,
And strike the sinner there!

John Fletcher, who has been mentioned as quoting Des Barreaux's lines to Charles Wesley, was the saint of early Methodism.

In Wesley's *Life of Fletcher*, the following story is told in the language of Joseph Benson, from whom Wesley received it:

'I have sometimes seen him on these occasions [at Trevecca], once in particular, so filled with the love of God, that he could

contain no more; but cried out, "O my God, withhold Thy hand, or the vessel will burst!" But he afterwards told me he was afraid he had grieved the Spirit of God; and that he ought rather to have prayed that the Lord would have enlarged the vessel, or have suffered it to break; that the soul might have no further bar or interruption to its enjoyment of the supreme good.¹

The most singular circumstance here is that the experience is paralleled in the lives of many of the saints. It seems to be, if the phrase may be allowed, a standard type of spiritual ecstasy. It is related, in almost the same terms, with the same appeal against such excessive bliss, in the lives of holy men and women as different from John Fletcher as St. Francis Xavier, St. Philip Neri, Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque, Dr. Daniel M'Allum, a Methodist preacher of a hundred years ago, and, in our own days, Mr. Evan Roberts, the leader of the Welsh Revival of 1905.² But it was doubtless the wonderful experience of Fletcher that is recalled in Charles Wesley's fervent lines:

O would He more of heaven bestow,
And let the vessel break!
 And let our ransomed spirits go
 To grasp the God we seek!

Both John and Charles Wesley owed much, in many ways, to their elder brother Samuel. While he was Usher at Westminster School, he was the trusted friend of Prior and Pope; and he was a poet himself, not greatly gifted, but more than the equal of others who have made a greater name. There are constant reminiscences of his verse in the hymns.

In *The Battle of the Sexes* he wrote (addressing the lady who later became his wife):

¹ Wesley's *Works*, vol. xi, p. 296.

² James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 243; Hagenbach, *History of the Reformation*, ii, 409; and Bois, *Le Réveil au Pays de Galles*, p. 411.

And thou, dear object of my growing love,
Whom now I must not, or I dare not, name,
Approve my verse, which shines if you approve!

John Wesley borrowed a line of this in his translation of Spangenberg's *Der König ruht und schauet doch*—

*Great object of our growing love,
To whom our more than all we owe,
Open the fountain from above,
And let it our full souls o'erflow!*

and the phrase is used many times in other hymns.

Many other lines in the same poem are quoted in the hymns, such as:

Now cruel false, now seeming faithful, kind,
With well-dressed hate, and well-dissembled love,

in:

O may I calmly wait,
Thy succours from above!
And stand against their open *hate*,
And well-dissembled love,

and:

His hardened front, unblushing, unappalled,
Laughed at reproaches, and enjoyed disgrace,

in:

I then shall turn my steady face,
Want, pain defy, *enjoy disgrace*,
Glory in dissolution near!

and:

With cool disdain, the preacher he derides,
Who marks the eternal bounds of good and ill,

in:

To time our every smile or frown,
To mark the bounds of good and ill,
And beat the pride of nature down,
And bend or break his rising will.

In a *Hymn on Easter Day*, Samuel Wesley wrote:

In vain the stone, the watch, the seal,
 Forbid an early rise,
 To Him who breaks the gates of hell,
 And opens Paradise.

This is closely copied in Charles Wesley's great Easter hymn, 'Christ the Lord is risen to-day!':

*Vain the stone, the watch, the seal,
 Christ hath burst the gates of hell:
 Death in vain forbids His rise,
 Christ hath opened Paradise!*

Samuel Wesley wrote an elegy *On the Death of Mr. William Morgan*. He was an early associate of John and Charles Wesley at Oxford, whose death they were accused of hastening by the austerities which the early Methodists practised. In this poem occur these lines, describing Morgan:

Fearful of sin in every close disguise;
 Unmoved by threatening or by glozing lies,
 Whose zeal, for other men's salvation shown,
 Beyond the reach, of hell secured his own.

Two phrases in these lines are reflected in the hymns:

I want a true regard,
 A single, steady aim,
 (*Unmoved by threatening or reward*),
 To Thee, and Thy great Name.

Let us then sweet counsel take,
 How to make our calling sure,
 Our election how to make,
Past the reach of hell secure.

In *A Hymn to God the Father*, Samuel Wesley wrote:

In light unsearchable enthroned,
 Which angels dimly see;
 The Fountain of the Godhead own'd,
 And foremost of the Three!

The second line is borrowed in one of his brother's hymns:

With glorious clouds encompassed round,
Whom angels dimly see,
 Will the Unsearchable be found,
 Or God appear to me?

But behind Samuel Wesley's words there is a reminiscence of Milton, which has been already quoted.

There is one example where Charles Wesley borrowed from his elder brother which is of rather special interest, because behind Samuel Wesley's lines there is an epigram in the Greek Anthology. In a hymn entitled 'For a Sick Friend in Darkness' there is the stanza:

If now Thy will his soul require,
 O sit as a refiner's fire,
 And purge it first from sin;
Thy love hath quicker wings than death,
 The fulness of Thy Spirit breathe,
 And bring Thy nature in.

The striking phrase in the fourth line is from *The Tomb of Euphemius*:

A blooming youth lies buried here,
 Euphemius, to his country dear.
 Nature adorned his mind and face
 With every Muse, and every Grace,
 About the marriage-state to prove,
But Death had quicker wings than Love.

This is Samuel Wesley's rendering of an epigram by Gregory Nazianzen which ends: οἱ δ' ὑμέναιοι ἀμφὶ θύρας · ἦλθεν δ' ὁ φθόνος ὠκύτερος ('the singers of the hymeneal song were at his door, but Envy came more swiftly').¹ And there are many other phrases in the poems of Samuel Wesley that are similarly reflected in the hymns written by his younger and more famous brothers.

The hymns were very considerably influenced by the poems

¹ *Anth. Graec.*, viii, 126.

of Prior. There is, of course, a special reason for the high esteem in which Prior was held by all the Wesleys. He was the intimate friend of Atterbury—that singular prelate of whom John Wesley has recorded so high an opinion. And Samuel Wesley the younger, while Usher at Westminster School, was the trusted companion of Atterbury. He would meet Prior many a time at the Deanery; and John also, on his visits to the elder brother, would doubtless see the good-natured poet frequently. One can imagine that the Usher would point the moral of Mr. Prior's rise to greatness through scholarship—had he not been Ambassador at Paris, and did it not all begin through construing Horace in a tavern? At any rate, John Wesley held Prior in great esteem; and toward the end of his life, in his *Thoughts on the Character and Writings of Mr. Prior*, he went out of his way to defend the poet's memory.

An edition of Prior, with a memoir, appeared in 1779. Apparently this occasioned the revival of some scandalous stories which had been set about by Arbuthnot, Spence (of the *Anecdotes*), and Pope, as to the identity of Prior's 'Chloe'. Wesley wrote: 'I do not believe one word of this. Although I was often in his neighbourhood, I never heard a word of it before. It carries no face of probability. Would Bishop Atterbury have kept up an acquaintance with a man of such a character?'

Wesley passes on to express a high opinion of Prior's genius, and to record his judgement that his best verse does 'not yield to anything that has been wrote either by Pope, or Dryden, or any English poet, except Milton'. Especially he praises *Solomon*, as containing 'the strongest sense expressed in some of the finest verses that ever appeared in the English tongue'.

Charles Wesley shared his brother's admiration, and often recommended *Solomon* to his younger friends. He wrote, in a letter to his daughter Sally (October 1, 1778): 'You should therefore be always getting something by heart. Begin with the first book of Prior's *Solomon, the Vanity of Knowledge*. Let me see how much of it you can repeat when we meet.'

Accordingly, we find frequent reminiscences of the poem in the hymns of the brothers.

The second line of the couplet—

We weave the chaplet, and we crown the bowl,
And smiling see the nearer waters roll,

was clearly in the mind of Charles Wesley when he wrote:

Jesu, Lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While *the nearer waters roll*,
While the tempest still is high.

And the lines—

But O! beyond description happiest he
Who ne'er must roll on life's tumultuous sea,

were probably in his memory when he wrote:

Happy beyond description he
Who knows, The Saviour died for me!

The lines spoken by the Egyptian—

Or grant thy passion has these names destroy'd:
That Love, like Death, makes all distinction void,

were evidently the inspiration of a verse in the hymn which Edward FitzGerald so much admired:

Love, like Death, hath all destroyed,
Rendered our distinctions void!
Names, and sects, and parties fall:
Thou, O Christ, art all in all!

And Prior's apostrophe—

From *Now*, from *instant Now*, great Sire! dispel
The clouds that press my soul: from *Now* reveal
A gracious beam of light: from *Now* inspire
My tongue to sing, my hand to touch the lyre,

was apparently in the memory of the writer of the magnificent lines:

While low at Jesu's Cross I bow,
 He hears the blood of sprinkling *now*.
 This *instant now* I may receive
 The answer of His powerful prayer:
 This *instant now* by Him I live,
 His prevalence with God declare.

The phrase occurs again in another of Prior's poems (which is an imitation of the Latin stanzas, *Ad Amicos*, by Walter Danniston)—

The little time thou hast, 'twixt instant Now
 And Fate's approach, is all the Gods allow,

and there is another recollection of Prior's language in one of the *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love*—

I have choice of death or life,
 They both on *instant now* depend:
 Who shall tell me if the strife
 In heaven or hell shall end?

and still another in the hymn which begins:

Yes, from this *instant now*, I will
 To my offended Father cry.

The lines—

in the tomb

Naked again we must to-morrow lie,
 Born to lament, to labour, and to die,

are recalled in the hymn:

'Tis fit we should to dust return,
 Since such the will of the Most High:
 In sin conceived, to trouble born,
Born only to lament and die,

and the lines—

Yet tell me, frightened Reason! what is Death?
Blood only stopp'd, and interrupted breath?

are clearly remembered in the first couplet of another hymn:

*Tell me, affrighted reason, tell
What is that death I soon shall feel?*

There are also phrases of constant occurrence in the hymns that are traceable to the same source. 'The sun's directer rays' (found in hymns by both Samuel and Charles Wesley, and in a schoolboy translation of Horace by John Wesley), 'our cautioned soul', 'my constant flame'—these are all from *Solomon*.

The other poems of Prior have not influenced the Wesleys so much, but that is as we should expect; the difference of subject and tone amply accounts for it. Still, there are a few clear allusions to the minor poems. In his *Ode to a Lady, She refusing to continue a Dispute with Me*, Prior wrote:

You, far from danger as from fear,
Might have sustained an open fight.

Charles Wesley wrote, in the hymn 'Captain of Israel's Host and Guide':

*As far from danger as from fear,
While Love, Almighty Love, is near.*

In *Charity, a Paraphrase of the Thirteenth Chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Prior wrote:

Soft peace she brings wherever she arrives,
She builds our quiet, as she forms our lives,
Lays the rough paths of peevish nature ev'n,
And opens in each heart a little heaven.

This is remembered in the hymn:

The peace Thou hast given, This moment impart,
And open Thy heaven, O Love, in my heart!

And once more, Prior wrote in his *Henry and Emma*, an abominable Georgian perversion of a delightful old ballad (which John Wesley republished in the *Arminian Magazine*, to the great scandal of some of his followers):

If love, alas! be pain, the pain I bear
No thought can figure and no tongue declare.

John Wesley, in his superb translation of Gerhardt's hymn, wrote:

Jesu, Thy boundless love to me
No thought can reach, no tongue declare,

adopting Prior's phrase, and improving it.

To-day Matthew Prior is very largely a forgotten poet. But he had as much of the genuine poetic gift as any writer of his age. John Wesley, in this matter at any rate, is in very good company, for he is at one with writers as diverse as Cowper, Thackeray, and Swinburne, in his admiration for the genius of Prior.

Something of the freedom of their versification the Wesleys certainly owed to Prior. It was his influence that saved them from the monotonous antithesis of the 'correct' style of Pope, and almost every eighteenth-century writer, following in his train. In the Preface to *Solomon*, Prior wrote: 'I would say one word of the measure in which this and most poems of the age are written. Heroic with continued rhyme, as Donne and his contemporaries used it, carrying the sense of one verse most commonly into another, was found too dissolute and wild, and came very often too near prose. As Davenant and Waller corrected, and Dryden perfected it, it is too confined: it cuts off the sense at the end of every first line, which must always rhyme to the next following, and consequently produces too frequent an identity in the sound, and brings every couplet to the point of an epigram.' Johnson, in his *Lives of the Poets*, characteristically decides that Prior's attempt to put his critical principle into practice, 'by extending the sense from one

couplet to another, with variety of pauses', is 'without success: his interrupted lines are unpleasing, and his sense, as less distinct, is less striking'. We do not agree: *Solomon* is more free, more fluent, in its use of the heroic measure than any poem that was published within the next three generations. One of Prior's favourite methods of breaking the monotony of the couplet brings about a pause after the second syllable of the second line, as in—

And at approach of death shall only know
The truths, . . . which from these pensive members flow.
On the vile worm, that yesterday began
To crawl; . . . Thy fellow creature, abject man!
Yet take thy bent, my soul; another sense
Indulge, . . . add music to magnificence.

John Wesley caught this trick of *enjambement* from Prior, and his hymns abound with it. One or two examples will serve where dozens might be given:

To gain earth's gilded toys, or flee
The Cross . . . endured, my God, by Thee?
A man! an heir of death! a slave
To sin! . . . a bubble on the wave.

The verse of the Wesleys has not been greatly influenced by the writings of Pope, with the exception of a single poem. The hymns only contain two or three slight allusions to the *Essay on Man*, but they echo the language of *Eloisa to Abelard* in the most extraordinary way. Probably Charles Wesley had got the poem by heart, and hardly knew when he was quoting it.

The first line of the couplet—

Thy eyes diffused a reconciling ray,
And gleams of glory brightened all the day,

is recalled in one of Charles Wesley's earliest hymns, with a single change necessitated by the metre:

Thine eye diffused a quickening ray,
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light.

The lines—

To sounds of heavenly harps she dies away,
And melts in visions of eternal day,

are remembered in another hymn:

Till, on the bosom of my Lord,
I sink in blissful dreams away
And *visions of eternal day*.

Again, the lines—

How shall I lose the sin, yet keep the sense,
And love the offender, yet detest th' offence?

were evidently in Charles Wesley's mind when he wrote:

O may I learn that art,
With meekness to reprove!
To hate the sin with all my heart,
But still the sinner love.

The thought in the passage—

When, at the close of each sad, sorrowing day,
Fancy restores what vengeance snatched away,
Then conscience sleeps, and leaving nature free,
All my loose soul unbounded springs to thee,

is remembered and redeemed to a nobler significance in an evening hymn:

Loose me from the chains of sense,
Set me *from the body free*;
Draw, with stronger influence,
My unfettered soul to Thee!
In me, Lord, Thyself reveal,
Fill me with a sweet surprise:
Let me Thee when waking feel;
Let me in Thine image rise.

The lines in the same poem—

O happy state, when souls each other draw,
When love is liberty, and nature law,

lines which Pope repeated with a variation in the *Essay on Man*—

Converse and love mankind might strongly draw,
When love was liberty, and nature law,

were evidently in Charles Wesley's mind when he wrote:

Implant it deep within,
Whence it may ne'er remove,
The *law of liberty* from sin,
The perfect *law of love*.
Thy *nature* be my *law*,
Thy spotless sanctity,
And sweetly every moment draw
My happy soul to Thee.

Pope's couplet—

Oh grace serene! Oh virtue heav'nly fair!
Divine oblivion of low-thoughted care!

borrowed an epithet from *Comus*:

And with low-thoughted care
Confined and pestered in this pinfold here.

The phrase is remembered and used in a hymn:

O Love, Thy sovereign aid impart,
To save me from *low-thoughted care*;
Chase this self-will through all my heart,
Through all its latent mazes there!

The lines from the *Essay on Man*—

For wit's false mirror held up nature's light,
Shewed erring pride, whatever is, is right,

were probably in Charles Wesley's mind when he wrote:

No longer I
Lament and sigh,
With guilty fear oppress'd;
To me who on Thy love rely,
Whatever is, is best.

It is difficult for us in these days to understand the immense vogue of Young's *Night Thoughts* in the eighteenth century. Young's turgid platitudes are so wearisome to a modern reader that it needs an effort to discern the real poetic power which sometimes underlies the bombastic lines, and which goes some way toward justifying the rather fantastic judgement of D. G. Rossetti, that Young was the greatest poet of his century. But there can be no doubt as to the extent of Young's fame and influence in that age. Charles Wesley set his daughter to learn by heart long passages of Young's poem, and he himself more than once transcribed the whole of it. He said expressly: 'No writings but the inspired are more useful to me.' And some of the greatest names of that century might be quoted in support of Charles Wesley's high estimate of Young. He was in good company, at least, in his admiration for a poet who influenced Goethe, who was quoted on the scaffold by Camille Desmoulins, and to the study of whose writings Burke himself ascribed his own splendid style. One of the hymns—

Stand the omnipotent decree!
Jehovah's will be done!
Nature's end we wait to see,
And hear her final groan;
Let this earth dissolve, and blend
In death the wicked and the just,
Let those ponderous orbs descend,
And grind us into dust,

is a deliberate paraphrase of a passage in the *Night Thoughts*

If so decreed, the Almighty Will be done,
Let earth dissolve, yon pond'rous orbs descend,
And grind us into dust; the soul is safe;
The man emerges.

The lines—

they see

On earth a bounty not indulged on high,
And downward look for Heaven's superior praise,

are recalled in the verse:

Ye seraphs, nearest to the Throne,
With rapturous amaze,
On us, poor ransomed worms, *look down*
For Heaven's superior praise.

And the vivid but unfortunate image in the lines—

Thou who didst save him, snatch the smoking brand
From out the flames, and quench it in Thy Blood,

is reproduced in many stanzas, such as:

I want an even strong desire,
I want a calmly fervent zeal,
To save poor souls out of the fire,
To snatch them from the verge of hell,
And turn them to a pardoning God,
And quench the brands in Jesu's blood!

Young's apostrophe—

Happy day that breaks our chain!
That manumits, that calls from exile home,

reappears in a hymn as:

O happy, happy day,
That calls Thy exiles home!
The heavens shall pass away,
The earth receive its doom;
Earth we shall view, and heaven destroyed,
And shout above the fiery void.

The verse—

His love, surpassing far
The love of all beneath,
We find within our hearts, and dare
The pointless darts of death,

borrowed a phrase from Young's line:

Death's pointless darts, and hell's defeated storms.

The lines—

the rush of years

Beats down their strength; their numberless escapes
In ruin end,

are remembered in a hymn which is a paraphrase of Jeremiah
xxiii. 24:

*The rush of numerous years bears down
The most gigantic strength of man;
And where is all his wisdom gone
When dust he turns to dust again?*

Here Charles Wesley wrote 'beats down', and the word was
altered to 'bears down' by John Wesley in his revision.

The lines—

Poor is the friendless master of a world:
A world in purchase for a friend is gain,

are reproduced in one of the hymns—

Poor is the man by slaves adored,
*Of kneeling worlds the friendless lord;
A thousand barter'd worlds to obtain
The blessing of a friend were gain,*

and the lines—

Therefore, be thou fixed,
Fixed as a sentinel, all eye, all ear,

are recalled in another hymn—

And while His glorious voice we hear
Our spirits are *all eye, all ear*,
And silence speaks His praise,

but Young had borrowed from Milton, as he so often did, for we read in *Paradise Lost* (vi, 350) of the celestial spirits:

All heart they live, all head, *all eye, all ear*,
All intellect, all sense.

The lines—

My praise! for ever flow;
Praise ardent, cordial, constant, to high heaven,

are reflected in another hymn:

To Thee, by whom we live,
Our praise and lives we pay,
Praise ardent, cordial, constant give,
And shout to see the day.

Young's rather awkward metaphor—

and final ruin fiercely drives
Her ploughshare o'er creation!

is remembered in one of the *Hymns on the Earthquake*—occasioned by the earthquake which occurred on March 8, 1750:

What man on earth survives
The earth to chaos hurl'd,
When *final ruin fiercely drives*
Her ploughshare o'er the world!

The lines—

Nothing is dead, but that which wish'd to die;
Nothing is dead but wretchedness and pain,

were evidently in Charles Wesley's mind when he wrote, in one of the *Funeral Hymns*:

His real life doth still remain,
Nothing is dead but grief and pain,
But that which wish'd to die.

Young's apostrophe—

Father of angels! but the friend of man!
Like Jacob, fondest of the younger-born!

is recalled in the fine stanza:

But God made flesh is wholly ours,
And asks a nobler strain,
The Father of celestial powers,
The Friend of earth-born man.

(There is another recollection of Young, by the way, in the next verse of this hymn, which has been already quoted.)

The lines—

Heaven's Sovereign saves all beings but Himself
That hideous sight, a naked human heart,

are remembered in another hymn:

Thou dost in purity delight,
Most holy, Lord, Thou art,
And yet Thou bear'st *that hideous sight,*
A naked, human heart.

There are also several recollections in the hymns of Young's *Last Day*. The apostrophe—

Triumphant King of Glory! Soul of bliss!
What a stupendous turn of fate is this!

is recalled in the hymn for Easter:

King of Glory! Soul of bliss!
Everlasting life is this,
Thee to know, Thy power to prove,
Thus to sing, and thus to love.

And the lines—

Drive back the tide, suspend a storm in air,
Arrest the sun, but still of this despair,

are adapted in another hymn, with a mystical sense of which Young was utterly incapable:

Thou my impetuous spirit guide,
And curb my headstrong will;
Thou only canst *drive back the tide*,
And bid the sun stand still.

The hymn (the only one on this dread subject included in the *Collection of 1780*)—

Terrible thought! shall I *alone*,
Who may be saved, shall I,
Of all, alas! whom I have known,
Through sin for ever die?

is based upon a neighbouring passage in the same poem:

thy wretched self alone
Cast on the left of all whom thou hast known,
How would it wound?

Many other examples of Young's influence might be quoted. Apart from distinct allusions to his lines, he enriched the language of Charles Wesley by favourite phrases, such as 'the starry crown', 'the mighty void', and by favourite words such as 'triumph' and 'pomp'—the latter occurring almost as incessantly in Young as in the hymns.

It is not the least part of the spiritual privilege of Methodists that these magnificent hymns have so many links with literature. Dryden called Ben Jonson 'the great plagiarist', and spoke of 'tracking his footsteps in the snow'. The Wesleys were great plagiarists, in the same honourable sense, and it has not been

an unpleasant or an unfruitful task, I trust, to trace somewhat of their indebtedness, in thought and language, to the great writers of the past. It has been rightly said that one of the great charms of Milton is the 'implicit lore' of his verse—the amount of scholarship that is held in solution in his stately lines. There is a similar charm in the verse of the Wesleys: one is always finding fresh evidence, embedded in the hymns, of their wide reading and exact knowledge. These spiritual songs, like Prospero's isle, are full of echoes.

The hymns of Methodism stand alone, in many respects, in the religious literature of the world. They are unique in their intimate connection with one of the greatest spiritual movements of history, for the very genius of the Evangelical Revival is in their burning lines: they enshrine what has been well called 'the holy, compassionate, believing spirit of early Methodism'. And, while they constitute the greatest body of devotional verse in the language, they are wholly the work of those astonishing and apostolic men who were not only brothers by blood, but also—

brothers

In honour, as in one community,
Scholars and gentlemen.

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